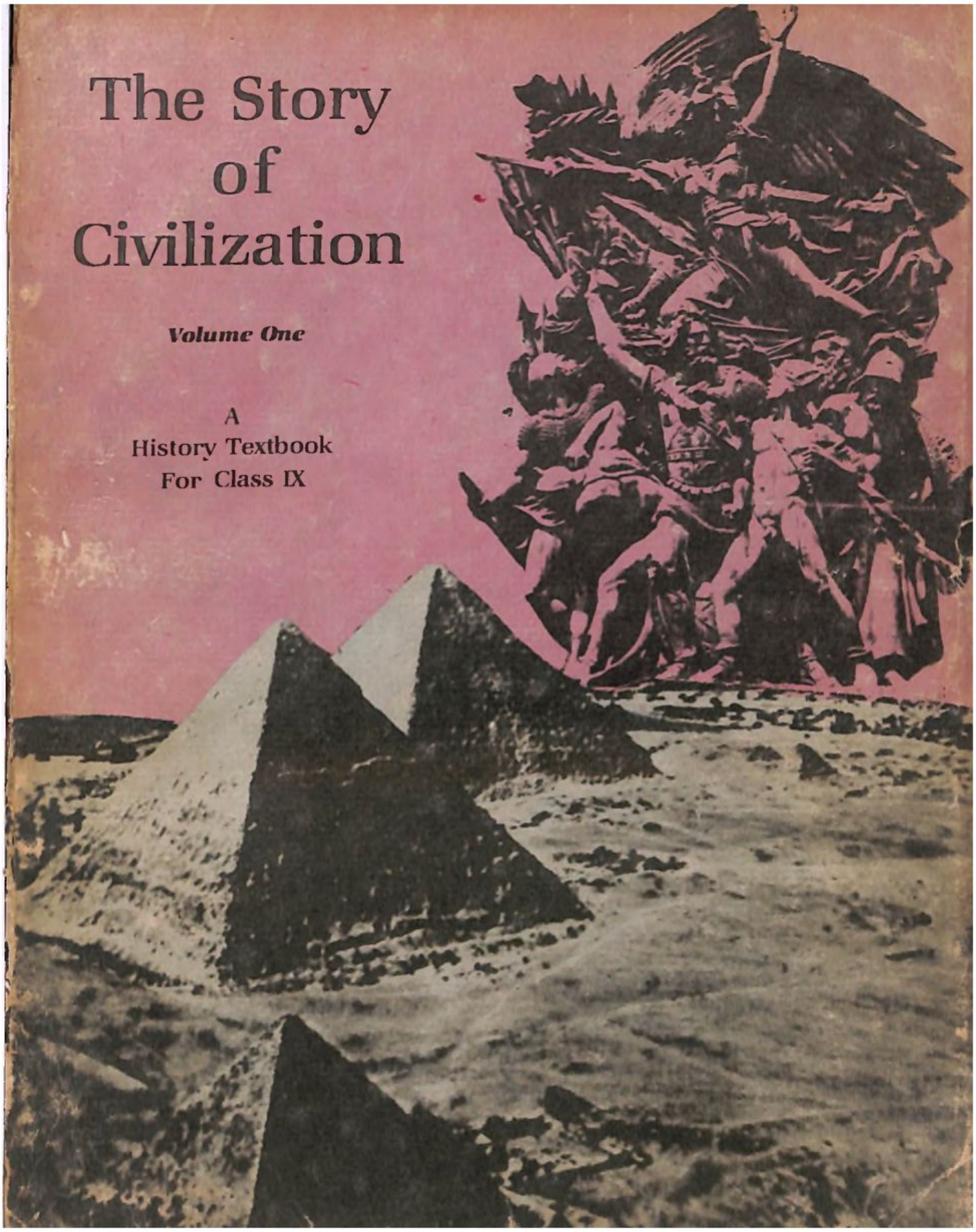
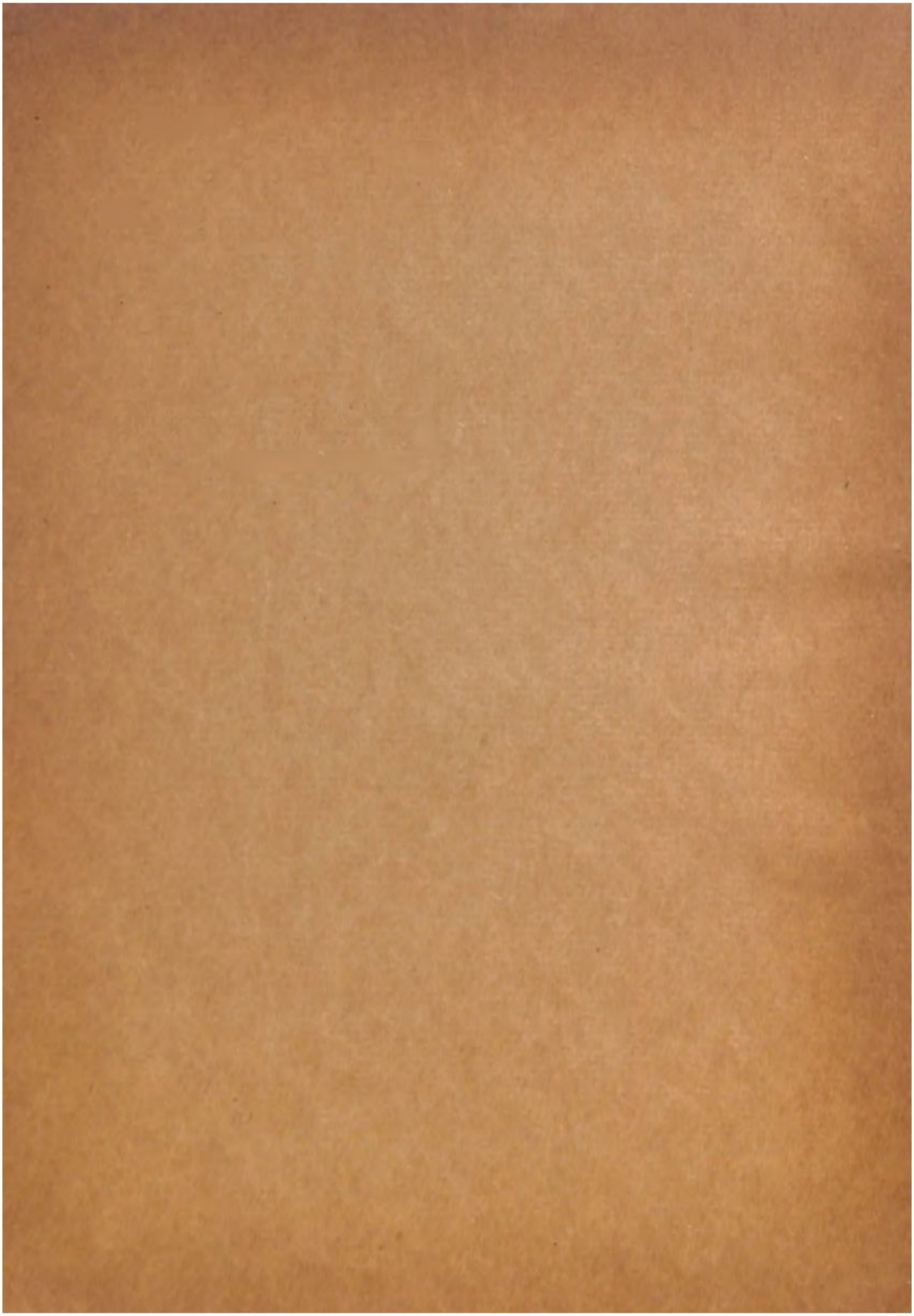
The Story of Civilization

Volume One

A
History Textbook
For Class IX





THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION

Volume I

J.P.R.

G K Sharma
24.12.92

THE STORY OF CIVILIZATION

Volume I

A History Textbook for Class IX

Arjun Dev

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

First Edition
May 1989
Vaisakha 1911

Reprinted
January 1990
Magha 1910

November 1990
Kartika 1912

P.D. 125T-MB

© National Council of Educational Research and Training, 1989

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

☐ No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

☐ This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise disposed of without the publisher's consent, in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published.

☐ The correct price of this publication is the price printed on this page. Any revised price indicated by a rubber stamp or by a sticker or by any other means is incorrect and should be unacceptable.

Cover : Santo Datta
C.P. Tandan

A Note on the Cover

The front cover, on the left, shows the pyramids in Egypt which are among the most magnificent remains of one of the earliest civilizations. On the right is Francois Rude's relief sculpture called *Departure of the Volunteers of 1972 (The Marseillaise)* on the Arch of Triumph in Paris. The relief depicts a group of volunteers marching to the defence of the French Republic and the French Revolution which were threatened by foreign intervention. The top figure in the relief is the goddess of war inspiring the volunteers with the singing of the French revolutionary song *The Marseillaise*.

The back cover shows the sculpture of Gautama the Budha from Sarnath. On its right, a lithograph depicts a scene from the Revolution, of 1848 in Berlin.

Rs. 16.50

Published at the Publication Department by the Secretary, National Council of Educational Research and Training, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016 and printed at Rajendra Ravindra Printers (Pvt.) Ltd., Ram Nagar, New Delhi 110 055.

Foreword

Reorienting the content and process of education is of crucial importance in the implementation of the National policy on Education-1986. As a step in this direction, the NCERT has brought out a framework for national curriculum for primary and secondary schools and syllabus guidelines and detailed syllabi in various subjects for various stages of school education. New textbooks and other instructional materials are being brought out in a phased manner.

History is introduced as a separate subject as a part of the social sciences from Class VI onwards. During the five years of upper primary and secondary stage (Classes VI-X), the child is introduced to a systematic study, appropriate to the school stage, of Indian history and of other civilizations from the earliest times to the modern. The primary aim of teaching history at these stages is to develop an appreciation of both the national heritage and the total human heritage. Within this broad framework, the course in Indian history is introduced at the upper primary stage and that in other civilizations at the secondary stage.

The present course for Classes IX and X consists of a broad survey of the history of the world, with its focus on important stages in the growth of civilizations and on scientific and cultural development. The emphasis is on the aspects of change and development, and on the contributions of different peoples and cultures to the heritage of mankind. An attempt has also been made to focus on certain aspects of modern Indian hisotry, particularly on India's struggle for freedom, that have a close bearing on contemporary India. The details of political history, particularly dynastic history, have been reduced to the minimum, though some attention has been paid to the growth of political systems and their diversities. Many important developments and many cultures and civilizations have had to be left out owing to the limitations imposed by the time allotted to the teaching of the subject. However, in spite of these limitations, an attempt has been made to deal with the main course of human history in its aspects of unity and diversity, continuity and change. It is hoped that these volumes will deepen the pupils' understanding of the world and develop in them ideas and attitudes which are imperative for national and international development and will help them to appreciate that the world of man is indivisible.

The course for Classes IX and X is being covered in two volumes. The present volume covers the period from the prehistoric times to about the end of the nineteenth century.

The NCERT is grateful to Professor Arjun Dev, who has prepared this volume, and to his colleagues, particularly Ms Indira Arjun Dev, for their help at various stages in the preparation and finalization of this book. An earlier version of this book was reviewed

with the help of a number of experts at a workshop held at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. We are grateful to the experts for their help and to the Centre which not only provided the venue for the workshop but also, and more importantly, made available to us the expertise in the history of different regions of the world. We are grateful to Dr. Qamaruddin for his help in reviewing the exercises and to Shri R.P. Pathak for assisting in the finalization of the manuscript. The NCERT is also grateful to the institutions, agencies and individuals who have provided illustrations included in this volume.

The NCERT will be grateful for any comments, criticisms and suggestions from readers on any aspect of the present volume.

P.L. Malhotra
Director
National Council of Educational Research and Training

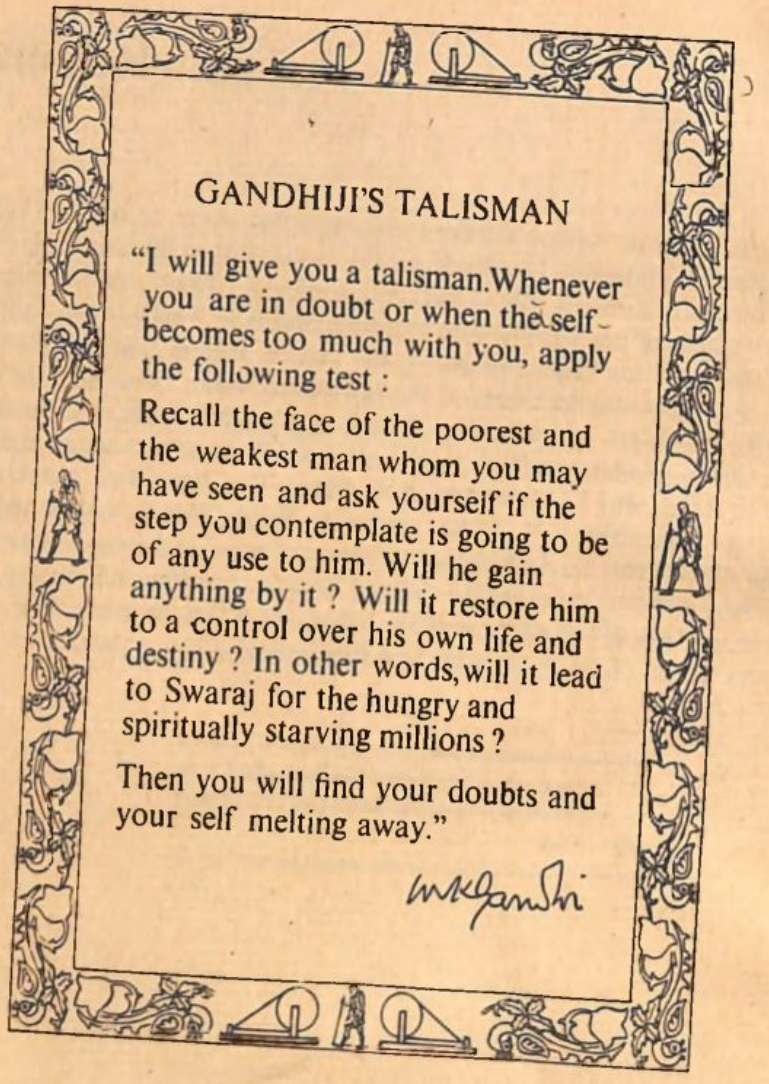
New Delhi

Acknowledgements

The preparation of this volume has been made possible owing to the help of a number of individuals and institutions. Our thanks are due particularly to the following : The panels headed by the late Professor B. Ghosh and Professor Satish Chandra, under whose guidance the earlier versions of this volume were prepared; Shri B.M. Pande of the Archaeological Survey of India for his help in preparing the text on ancient Iran and pre-Columbian Americas, and Dr. Anirudha Gupta of the Jawaharlal Nehru University for his help in preparing the text on pre-colonial Africa; Dr G.L. Adhya, the late Dr. S.K. Saini, Professor S.H. Khan and Dr Qamaruddin for their help in preparing an earlier version of this volume; Miss Nirmal Bajaj, Shri S.S. Saar, Shri A.K. Ghose, Shri Jassu Ram and Miss Ranjana Vajpai for the maps; Shri C.K. Vajpai, Shri K.C. Wagh, Shri B. Ashok and Shri G.K. Virmani for illustrations; the Archaeological Survey of India and many embassies in India, especially the American Center and the Cultural Section of the French Embassy, for making available to us many photographs; and Ms Indira Arjun Dev for her help at every stage and in every aspect of the preparation and finalization of this volume.

An eight-page supplement has been added at the end of this book to mark the bicentenary of the French Revolution

---



GANDHIJI'S TALISMAN

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test :

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions ?

Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away."

M K Gandhi

Contents

Chapter 1	**Life in Prehistoric Times**	**1—21**
	Archaeology and Prehistory—Life Begins on Earth—Evolution of Man—The Palaeolithic Age—The Neolithic Age	
Chapter 2	**Bronze Age Civilizations**	**22—47**
	The Harappan Culture—The Mesopotamian Civilization—The Egyptian Civilization—The Chinese Civilization	
Chapter 3	**Early Iron Age Civilizations**	**48—101**
	Ancient Indian Civilization—The Civilization of Ancient China—The Iranian Civilization—The Greek Civilization—The Roman Civilization—Judaism and Christianity	
Chapter 4	**Early American and African Civilizations**	**102—126**
	Early American Civilizations : Early Cultures—The Mava Civilization—The Aztecs—The Incas Early African Cultures and Civilizations : The People of Africa—From Old Stone Age to the Beginning of Iron Age—Kingdom of Kush—Kingdoms of Nubia and Aksum—The Sudanic Kingdoms—Civilizations of the Bantu Peoples—Kingdom of Kongo—The Lunda Empire—The Kingdom of Mwenemutepa—Coastal Regions of East Africa	
Chapter 5	**The Medieval World**	**127—161**
	Medieval Europe—Feudal System in Europe—Trade and Commerce in Medieval Europe—Church in Medieval Europe—The Arab Civilization—India in Medieval Times—China and Japan in Medieval Times	

Chapter 6	**Beginning of the Modern Age**	**162—198**
	Disintegration of the Feudal System—Renaissance—Humanism—Art and Architecture—Renaissance Literature—The Invention of Printing—Beginning of Modern Science—Reformation—Evils of the Catholic Church—Protests Against the Church—Martin Luther and Protestant Reformation—Political Factors—Spread of Protestant Reformation—Catholic Reformation—Conflicts in the Name of Religion—Explorations, Discovery, Trade—Great Explorations : 1492-1520—Trade and Colonization—Rise of Nation-States—The First Nation-States—Nation-States and National Rivalry—Accomplishments of Nation-States—Struggle Against Absolutism—The English Revolution	
Chapter 7	**Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution**	**199—213**
	Rise of Capitalism—The Industrial Revolution—The Revolution Begins in England—Revolution in Agriculture—Spread of the Industrial Revolution—Competition in Trade and Rise of Imperialism—Consequences of Industrialization : From Village to City—Industrial Revolution and the First Industrial Workers—Efforts to Improve Working Conditions in Industry—Government Responsibility and Industrialization—The Rise of Socialism	
Chapter 8	**Revolutionary and Nationalist Movements**	**214—253**
	The American Revolution—The French Revolution—Revolutions in America—Revolutionary Movements in Europe—Revolutions of 1848—Growth of Democracy in England—Unification of Germany—Unification of Italay—Socialist Movement	

CHAPTER 1

Life in Prehistoric Times

THIS CHAPTER tells us the story of man from the days when he appeared on the earth to the time when he began to record events in writing. That part of the story of man's progress for which we have written records is known as history. But man had lived on this earth for several hundred thousand years before he learned the art or writing. This long, distant past when man kept no written records is called prehistory, or, as we often say, prehistoric times.

Little was known about prehistoric times until the last century when scholars began to dig up the places where prehistoric men lived. This digging brought to light old tools, pottery, habitats and bones of ancient men and animals. By piecing together the information obtained from these things, scholars have built up a fairly good record of what happened and how men lived in prehistoric times. It was no longer possible to believe, as even learned men in Europe believed till the 18th century, that man was created in the year 4004 B.C., that is, only six thousand years ago!

The story of man starts about three million years ago. About this time, early man, evolved from tree apes, began to learn to walk on two feet on the earth. Slowly, very slowly, his brain increased in size and improved in quality. It was not until thirty or forty thousand years ago, however, that *Homo sapiens* appeared. *Homo sapiens* or 'Wise Man' is the species to which the present day man belongs.

Man learned to join his fellow men and go in search of the fruits and game that nature provided. Over a period of several hundred thousand years, he learned to make tools of stone, use animal skins for clothes and build shelters. He also learned to make fire—and most important—he learned to speak. But he still lived by hunting, fishing and gathering the food that nature provided. This period in early man's development is commonly known as the Ols Stone Age or the *Palaeolithic age.*

The pace of human progress quickened only about 8000 B.C., or 10,000 years ago when man began to make a variety of fine tools. This period is known as the Middle Stone Age, also called the *Mesolithic Age*. Then, in Asia, and later in other parts of the world, man learned the art of growing his food. This was the beginning of agriculture. From a food-gatherer, man became a food-producer. The cultivation of crops brought about such great changes in man's life that it marks the beginning of a new age, the New Stone Age or the *Neolithic age*.

The body structure of man has changed little in the last 30,000 years with the appearance of *Homo sapiens*. But, there is another kind of change in his development that has never stopped to this day. That is the change in his *culture*. The term 'culture' is used to describe such things as how man earns his living, what kind of house he lives in, what skills he uses, what things he produces, how much knowledge he has acquired, how he lives with his fellow men, what he believes, how much leisure time he has and what he does with this time.

Man has never been satisfied with the way he lives. He has always struggled to make improvements. In this struggle which has been both long and painful, he has been successful. He has gone ahead to find easier, better ways of earning his living, to set up better ways of cooperating with his fellow men, to discover new knowledge to express his ideas in art and literature. To put all this in a few words, man's culture has been progressing. The cultures of groups of people that have become highly developed are often called *civilizations*.

Although man's culture has been advancing throughout the ages, the pace has not always been the same either in every period or in every part of the world. Thus, when we read that great progress was achieved in a particular period, we must not think that all cultures achieved that progress. Nor should we think that culture has progressed at a uniform rate. However, no cultures have continued completely unaffected by other cultures. In our time, the pace of development is faster than in any previous period in the life of man. And developments in one part of the globe now affect every other part very quickly.

We will see how one culture came to affect, and be affected by other cultures as we study other chapters in this book. We will also see that in a sense, every chapter is some part of the story of man's progress or his struggle for progress. The life of prehistoric man is only the first chapter in that story.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND PREHISTORY

What is Archaeology ?

Scholars who have made a science of digging up old sites in the form of mounds and ruins to shed light on the everyday lives and occupations of our ancestors in the remote past are *archaeologists*. *Archaeology*, The work of archaeologists, has made us familiar with several hundred thousand years of human progress. Excavations have brought to light a mass of objects. These include tools and weapons, monuments and relics, arts and crafts of ancient peoples, the homes in which they lived, the temples in which they worshipped and the setting in which they spent their lives. In short, archaeologists have supplied materials to historians for a full social and cultural history, the kind of history that could never have been written before.

Sometimes, discoveries of great cultures of the past have been made by accident. In 1856, for example, two brothers—James and William Burton—who were engaged in laying out the railway line from Karachi to Lahore, tried to get bricks for their line from the nearby mounds. This digging for bricks led to the discovery of two ancient cities, Harappa in West Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sind. But it was not until 70 years later, with the labours of R.D. Banerji working under Sir John Marshall and N.G. Majumdar, that the facts about these 5000-year-old cities came to light. To archaeologists, then, we owe our knowledge of the civilizations of Mohenjodaro and Harappa in India, and of the Sumerians, the Babylonians, and the Assyrians in West Asia. Before the excavations were made, nobody even guessed that there had been a great civilization on the Mediterranean island of Crete. The whole history of ancient Egypt, to minute details of everyday life, has been revealed by archaeology. Archaeology has also enabled us to understand the life of man tens of thousands of years ago when he did not lead a settled life, used only crude stone tools, and co-operated with his fellow men only in the most elementary ways.

Methods of Archaeology

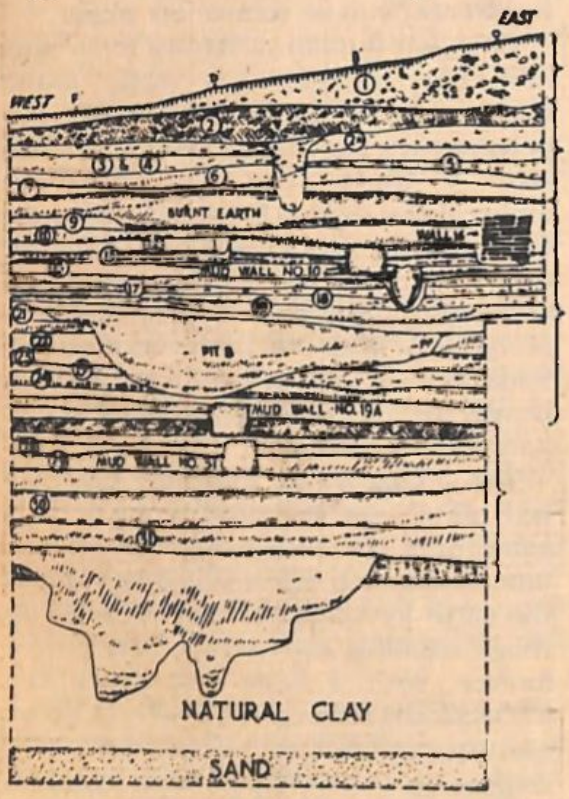
With the passage of time, many things which would help us to understand the cultures of early man are damaged or destroyed. But certain factors help in preserving articles which would otherwise decay in a short time. In the dry climate of Egypt, for example, wooden furniture and even grass mats and delicate cloth have been found intact inside the great pyramids. Wheat and barley in a desert granary had even the beards well preserved. The volcanic eruption which buried the ancient Roman city of Pompeii preserved bread in a baker's shop. Extreme cold is also an excellent preservative. In a pit full of snow, in Siberia, was discovered a prehistoric mammoth, almost completely intact.

Complete human skeletons, tools, pots and other artifacts are rarely found together at one place. A bone from a jaw or leg or a few teeth are almost all that one usually finds. The clay pots an archaeologist digs up in great quantity are found in fragments. To get a picture of man and his life in prehistoric times, an archaeologist studies minutely the pieces of objects he finds and the layers where he finds them. In this task of reconstruction, he has the help of the geologist, zoologist and other scientists.

The archaeologist digs very carefully with his pickaxe and spade. When he finds something he does not lift it up immediately. An object which has lain in the earth for centuries may crumble on rough handling and its story may be lost forever. With a knife and brush the archaeologist removes the dust from above and around the object without disturbing its position. Once it happened in Iraq that, while excavating the tomb of an ancient queen at Ur, a gold knob was found. When it was carefully removed, a hole was seen in the ground beneath it. This suggested that under the knob there was something made of wood which had decayed and turned to dust, leaving only the hole there. The archaeologists poured plaster of paris into this hole. The result was a complete plaster cast of a harp, and in it were studded here and there gold nails that, like the gold knob, once decorated the precious harp of the queen.

Dating Archaeological Finds

Archaeologists use different methods to determine the date of the articles they discover. If coins or inscriptions bearing the name of a king are found, the approximate date of other objects found with them can be fixed. Dating is easier if the site is stratified, that is, if it is a place where human settlement has been continuous for centuries, so that the archaeological remains of different times are found in the same place at different layers or levels. The objects found at lower levels of such sites belong to an earlier period than those found at the upper levels. Stratified sites read almost like a book: archaeologists can often read through the thousands of years back to the first foundations of the settlement.



1.1 Section of stratified site at Hastinapur

Physics has greatly helped in finding out how old an object is. All living things, whether plants or animals, contain radio-active carbon called Carbon-14. Radio-active materials, as you know from your study of physics, are those which send out very,very small particles at a fixed rate that can be measured. When animals and plants are alive, they absorb the same amount of Carbon-14 from the atmosphere as they lose through radioactivity. When a living thing dies, it continues to lose Carbon-14 but ceases to absorb it from the atmosphere. Thus, its Carbon-14 content goes on reducing with time at a fixed rate. By finding out the Carbon-14 content of an object, physicists can tell us approximately how old that object is. This system of finding out the time of an object is known as Carbon-14 dating.

Contribution of Anthropology

Archaeologists are helped by *anthropology* in understanding the past. Anthropology is the study of man— of his physical characteristics and his culture, his customs, his modes of behaviour and his relations with other men. The archaeologist digs out the objects. These objects have to be analysed and understood to form a picture of the life of the people. Here the science of anthropology is an aid. The anthropologist helps in reconstructing the physical characteristics of early man from the skeletal materials and in understanding the culture of a society on the basis of the artifacts, dwellings, monuments and pictures.

The study of today's primitive societies by anthropologists and others has helped in understanding prehistoric societies.

Historians, in co-operation with archaeologists and anthropologists, are thus enabled to trace the development of human societies from the prehistoric to the historic period.

LIFE BEGINS ON EARTH

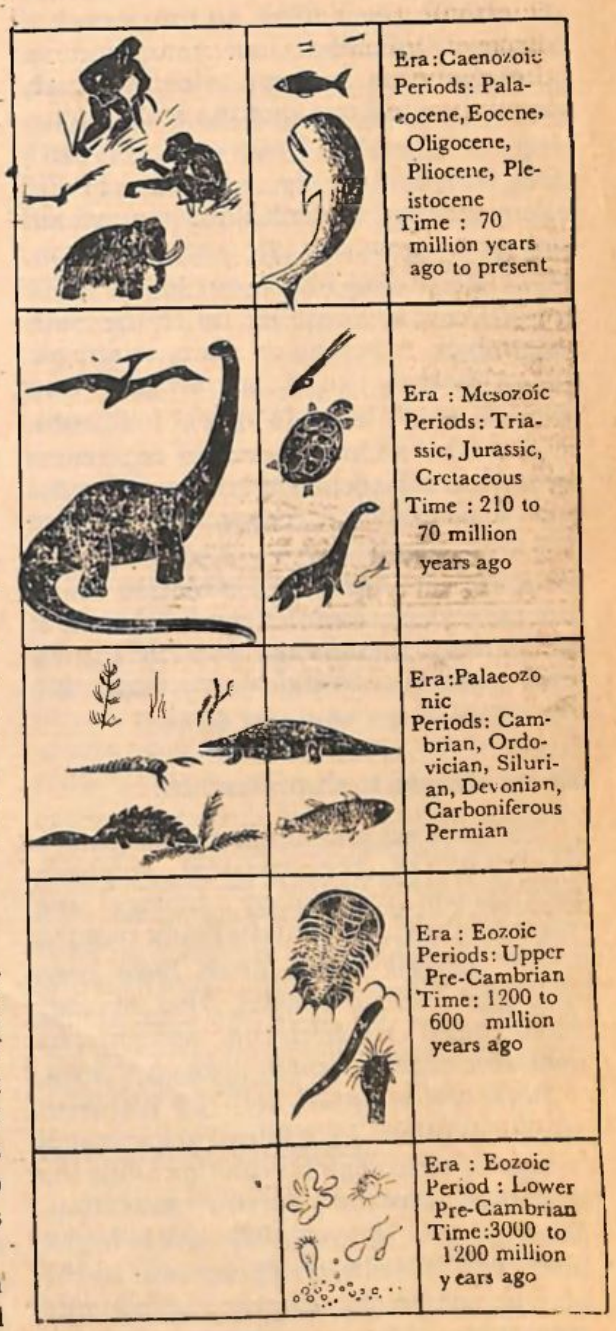
The Earth : Man's Home

Physical features and climate have always had a great influence on the development of human customs and habits. The age of the earth is now calculated to be about 4500 million years. In the early period of its existence, the earth was restless. Deep-seated forces inside the earth, plus wind, rain, and ice on the surface were constantly changing the shape of the earth's crust, forming mountains and oceans. Sometimes old sea beds were thrown up by earth movements to form mountain peaks. An example of this process is the peak of Mt. Everest where under the thick ice can be found fossils of invertebrates that once lived on the bed of an ancient sea. The changes in the earth's surface produced changes in climate which in their turn greatly influenced the development and distribution of life.

Geological Ages of the Earth

The geologist tries to read the history of the earth from the layers of rocks that have been formed over the hundreds of millions of years of its existence. The rock layers formed first are naturally below the rock layers that were formed later. This vast span of geological time is divided into five eras, each named according to its most characteristic forms of life.

Look at the illustrated chart which presents in a simple way the geological ages and their outstanding life forms. When speaking of geological times we do not speak in terms of decades or centuries but millions and hundreds of millions of years. The last of the geological eras, the


Era: Caenozoic
Periods: Palaeocene, Eocene, Oligocene, Pliocene, Pleistocene
Time : 70 million years ago to present
Era : Mesozoic
Periods: Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous
Time : 210 to 70 million years ago
Era: Palaeozoic
Periods: Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian, Devonian, Carboniferous Permian
Era : Eozoic
Periods: Upper Pre-Cambrian
Time: 1200 to 600 million years ago
Era : Eozoic
Period : Lower Pre-Cambrian
Time: 3000 to 1200 million years ago

I.2 Geological eras, periods and time of each era, and their characteristic forms of life

Caenozoic in which we are living is yet the shortest, less than one-fiftieth of all geological time. Even this era extends over 70 million years. The entire period of human civilization, as compared to geological time, appears to be extremely short. If we imagine that the 4500 million years of the earth's history since its birth are represented by a road of 100 kilometres and we walk along it, we would not come across any life, even vegetation, at all for the first half of our journey. We would have to continue up to the 88th kilometre before even simple invertebrates, such as worms and jellyfish, would begin to appear in the sea. At the 93rd kilometre certain organisms would leave the sea to live on land, but the mammals would not come on the scene till the 98th kilometre is reached. The entire period of man's physical evolution would not take more than the last 20 metres of our journey. And the age of written history and civilization would hardly take more than half of the very last stride !

From Simple to Complex Life

The growing knowledge in the various branches of the natural sciences particularly in geology, biology and palaeontology, has left little doubt that the earth and all living forms have been changing and developing. That is, they have been undergoing continuous *evolution*, or development through change.

Both the scientist and the historian study evolution; the scientist is interested in organic or biological evolution while the historian studies cultural evolution. Through this process, life which began hundreds of millions of years ago in the sea in single-cell forms evolved into organisms of more and more complex cells.

There are many similarties in the physical structure and functions of lower animals and of man– the highest product of the process of evolution. Man is both a mammal and a vertebrate, and hence has common ancestry with mammals and vertebrates. To Charles Darwin, as you know from your study of science,goes the credit for formulating the systematic explanation of evolution, and for collecting a great mass of evidence to support the explanation. Darwin's conclusions have been confirmed and developed by the further discoveries of fossils that show in hard rock the successive stages in evolution. However, the record is still incomplete for answering questions as to how man came to be what he is today.

EVOLUTION OF MAN

The Ice Age

Enormous changes had taken place during the Pleistocene period. There had been mountain-building on a large scale. When this period began the continents and oceans had taken their present form and the climate of the earth was roughly the same as we find it today. But, gradually the climate became colder. From about 600,000 until about 10,000 years ago the northerly parts of Asia, Europe and North America had alternate phases of very cold and warm climates. During the cold phases, the North Polar Ice Cap spread southward as a continuous sheet of ice over what is now the temperate zone. In the Himalayas the glaciers almost reached the foothills.

The term 'Ice Age' is actually misleading, for there was not one single continuous ice age but four quite distinct glacial periods, each separated from the next by a mild or warm interglacial period. So, alternating with four glacial periods

there were three interglacials. Early man made great progress during these interglacial periods.

The big climatic changes during the Ice Age naturally had a great effect on the plants and animals of the time; they migrated north and south with the alternating phases of heat and cold. The animals which depended on particular plants for their food had to migrate or adapt themselves to a new diet.

Sometimes, barriers on land and on the seas prevented the migration of animals, and many species that were unable to adapt themselves to the changed climate and new diet died out. Others went through processes of evolution and developed into new species better equipped to survive in the new climate. Among those species that lived through the great climatic variations were advanced primates, particularly man. Man belongs to the group of mammals known as *primates*. The classification includes not only man but all extant apes, monkeys, lemurs and tree-shrews.

Man Stands Erect

The tree apes, common ancestors of gorilla, chimpanzee and man, lived perhaps ten million years ago. Some of the apes—we do not know when or how—came down from the trees and gradually learned to stand and then to walk on their hind legs. This was the most important event in man's evolution. The erect position helped these animals to look farther in all directions and to save themselves from their deadly enemies, the bigger animals. They were thus on the road to developing a new way of life.

Life on the ground resulted in biological changes. The apes' daily exercise of climbing trees had already developed the bones of their wrists and accustomed their 'hands' to grasping things. In a standing position, the forelimbs were free to handle objects and to hold stout sticks as weapons. In course of time, the hand developed flexible fingers and an opposable thumb. This new development made the ape man a craftsman. He could now grasp things and bring them closer to his eyes. Side by side, the position of the internal organs of the body also changed to suit the erect posture. The brain developed and helped him to use his intelligence in fashioning tools and, eventually, in rising above the other animals.

Man Learns to Make Tools and Work with His Fellows

Biological development alone does not explain the essence of the development of man. The work that he performs in co-operation with his fellow men, and with the aid of tools which he makes, distinguishes man in the animal world. The first tools he used were pieces of stone and other things that he found lying around. The use of natural tools eventually caused man's ancestors to try to adapt objects to their needs and, later, to make different tools for different tasks. Thus, they now transformed natural objects into implements and took the first big step towards improving the living conditions provided by nature.

Man's Power of Speech

Every generation of human beings inherits the knowledge of the previous ones. Every generation adds new knowledge and passes it on to the next generation. It is through the continuous accumulation and transmission of

knowledge that man attains cultural progress. The ability to speak, the peculiar characteristic of man, makes this process of transmission possible.

The power of speech depends essentially on higher intelligence which produces ideas for expression. Only human beings possess such high intelligence.

Tool-making is also related to intelligence. It is thus a peculiarly human activity. Archaeologists, when determining whether the fossils of primates excavated by them are indeed of men and not of apes, decide by finding out whether these primates made tools. The artifacts of man, not his physical structure, are the best indication of the stage of culture he was in.

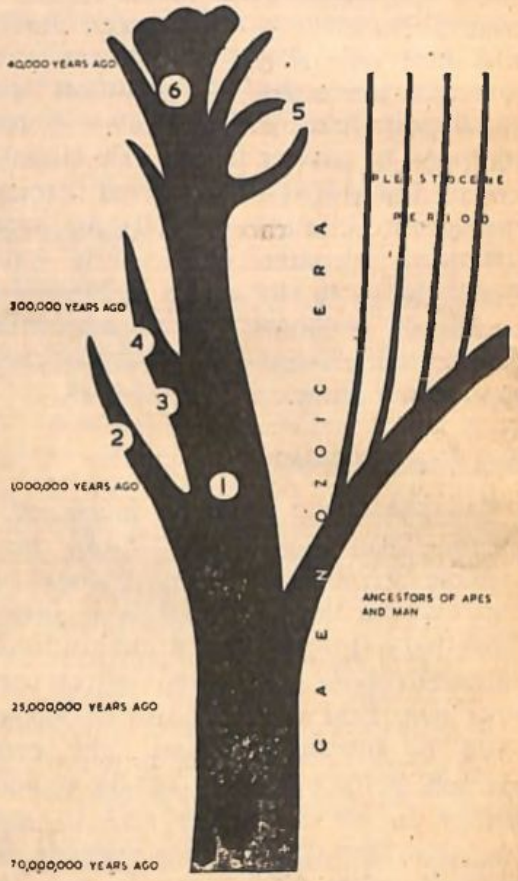
Species of Prehistoric Men

Latest discoveries have left little doubt that the earliest *hominids*, or man-like beings, first appeared in Africa during the early Pleistocene epoch. All of these have become extinct. Unfortunately no skeletons belonging to the Old Stone Age men have been found in India, although fossils of apes that belong to the common stock from which man and modern apes finally evolved, have been found in the Siwalik Hills.

The most well known of these lived more than eight million years ago and has been given the name *Ramapithecus*.

The first ape-man, who walked upright and was very close to being a hominid, was found in central Africa and named *Australopithecus*. A sub-species of Australopithecus, *Zinjanthropus*, is definitely known to have made tools. These beings seem to have lived as early

1.3 Ramapithecus



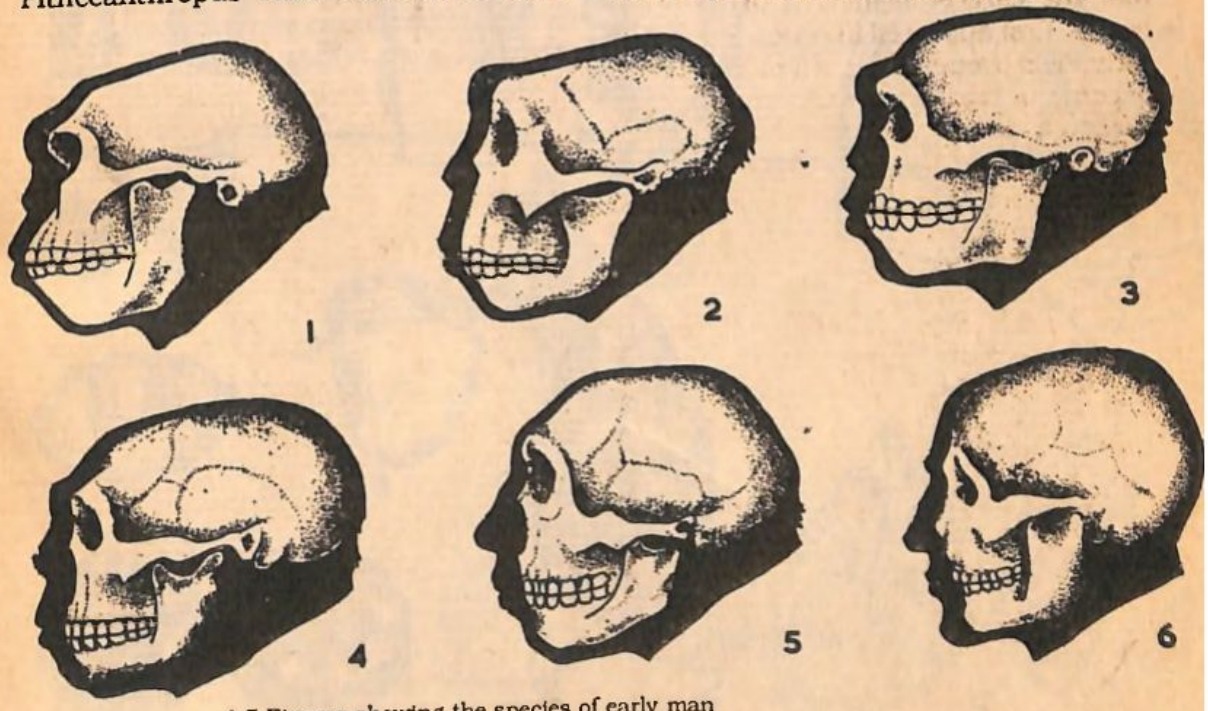
1.4 Tree showing the species of early man
1. Australopithecus 2. Zinjanthropus
3. Pithecanthropus Erectus (Java Man)
4. Sinanthropus (Peking Man) 5. Neanderthal Man 6. Cro-Magnon Man

as 500,000 years ago. They lived naked like other animals and ate mostly berries, nuts, roots, insects, and worms.

The remains of the earliest hominids in Asia were found in Java. Here were unearthed, from a river deposit a skull cap, teeth, and a thighbone. These bones, after study, were declared to belong to a hominid who could walk erect; so he was called the *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, the erect ape-man. Several years later the fossil remains of forty similar creatures were found in a cave near Peking in China. The *Peking Man*, who is known as the *Sinanthropus*, proved to be a slightly advanced cousin of the Java Man. It appears that the Pithecanthropus lived in many parts of South-east Asia between 500,000 and 200,000 years ago. In Europe the fossil representing the Pithecanthropus race was found near Heidelberg, Germany.

Much is known about the physical appearance of the Sinanthropus and of the way he lived from the study of his skeletons and of the caves where he lived. He knew how to make fire. During the Japanese invasion of China, the skeletal remains of the Sinanthropus were lost, or stolen. Luckily, the photographs and the casts of these remains have survived and are available for study. The search for the original remains, however, continues.

Neanderthal Man gets his name from the valley of Neander in Germany where his bones were first discovered; he represents the Middle Palaeolithic Age. He flourished in the icy caves of the fourth glaciation of the Ice Age, about 160,000 years ago, but died out rather abruptly some 40, 000 years ago. The Neanderthal man respected the dead and buried them



1.5 Figures showing the species of early man

1. Australopithecus 2. Zinjanthropus 3. Pithecanthropus Erectus 4. Sinanthropus 5. Neanderthal Man 6. Cro-Magnon Man

with offerings in graves. He seemed to believe in religion and a life after death also.

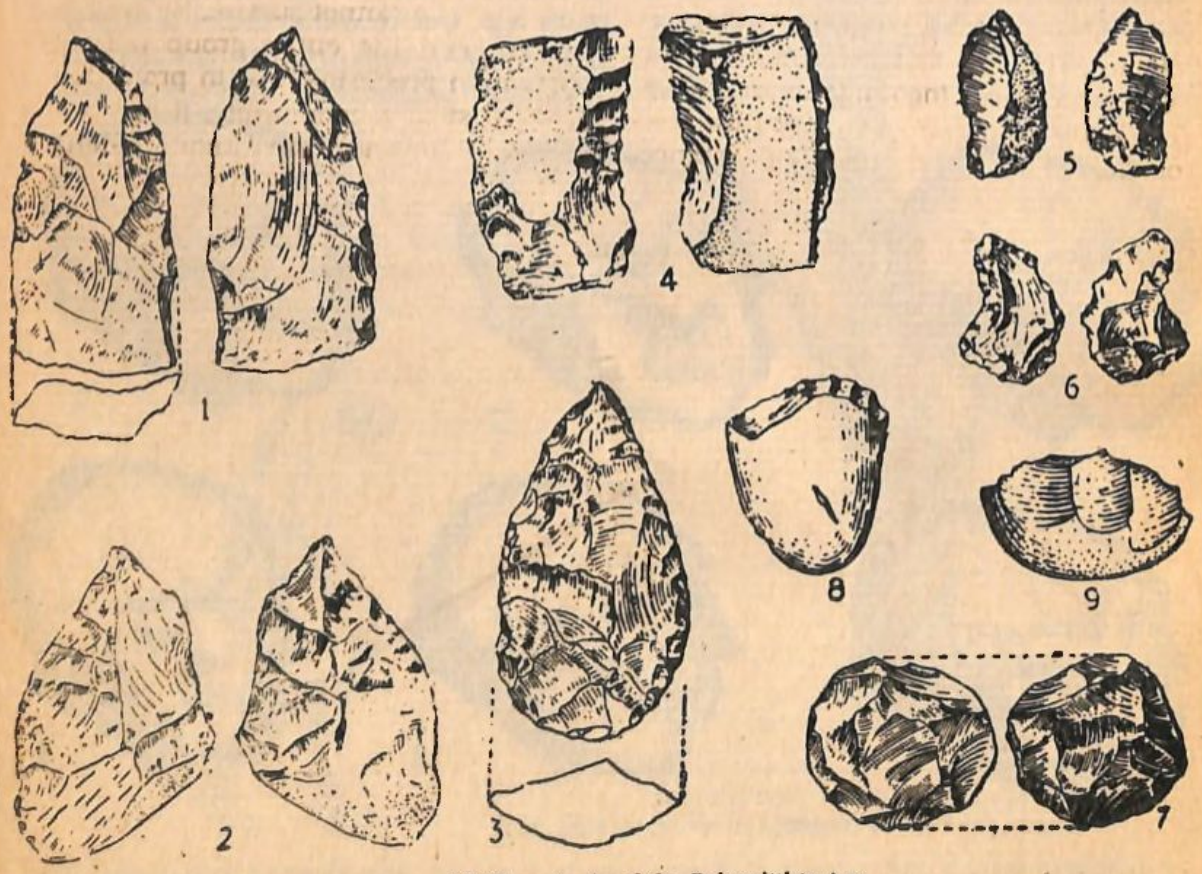
Neanderthal Man seems to have been succeeded by the *Cro-Magnon Man*, who belonged to the *Homo sapiens* species. There was also the *Grimaldi Man*, who also belonged to the *Homo sapiens* species.

THE PALAEOLITHIC AGE

Tools of Palaeolithic Man

As already stated, the process of cultural development may be said to have started when our sub-human ancestors had acquired the skill to produce crude tools that often looked like stones chipped or shaped under natural conditions. Stones flake easily as a result of many natural causes. This natural flaking might have suggested to man that he could also make stones into tools for different purposes. The tool-maker of the Pleistocene Age gradually learned just how to hold a piece of stone or rock and just how forceful a blow to deliver precisely at what angle, in order to remove flakes of the right size from the desired spot. Man in the Palaeolithic Age made and used only crude stone tools and was only a food-gatherer.

The tools of the Palaeolithic Age fall into three major types: *hand-axes*, *choppers*, and *flake implements*. Hand-axes appear to have been held in the fist, either to cut



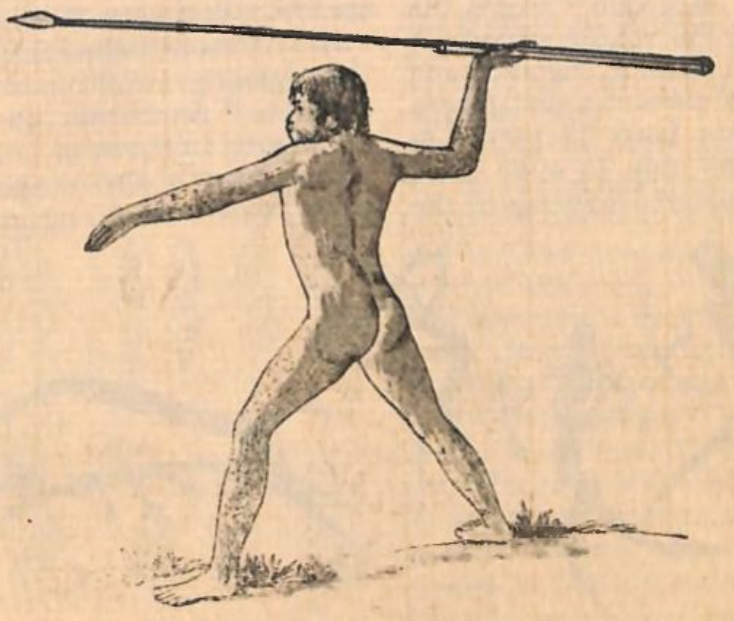
1.6 Stone tools of the Palaeolithic Age

or to give smashing blows. They were made by removing flakes from the hard centre of a piece of stone. Choppers must have been used to chop meat. They were made of heavy stones worked to a sharp edge in one direction only. Flake implements were smaller and thinner than hand-axes or choppers, but had sharper edges. Palaeolithic tools, found in many places in Europe, Africa, and Asia, have remarkably the same standard forms and were made in the same way.

Later a number of other tools were made of bone and ivory. There were even tools to make tools. Growth in knowledge led to the invention of mechanical devices like the bow and spear-thrower as weapons, which were superior to mere muscular power in fighting a deadly enemy. The bow and the spear-thrower increased the hitting range and accuracy. The hunter could shoot out several arrows or throw several spears at a distance, without disturbing a herd of animals. The bow remained the hunter's most efficient hand weapon till firearms were perfected.

Beginnings of Community Life

Hunting and fruit-gathering continued to be man's main occupation during the Palaeolithic Age and there is no evidence either of agriculture or of the domestication of animals. The details of social organization, or how man lived in relation to other men, are not known. But it is believed that he had learned to cooperate with his fellows in the common search for food. Physically, man is a very weak animal. He discovered long ago that unless he lives and acts together with other men, he cannot survive. He lived in a group and the entire group worked together in procuring food in protecting itself. In such a community, it was not possible for anyone to live without working



1.7 Spear-thrower

or to live on the labour of others. Of course, those who could not work, such as the very young and the very old had to be looked after by the community.

These communities, or clans did not settle in one place for a long time. They were compelled to follow the seasonal migration of the herds of animals. Sometimes, however, the game was plentiful in certain areas and this allowed them to live in a place for long periods in skin tents of caves.

The Palaeolithic man does not appear to have developed a sense of property. Very probably also, all men and women were regarded as of equal importance, and social inequalities had not yet come into existence.

Palaeolithic Art

Starting with crude outline drawing on the walls of his caves, Cro-Magnon Man became an accomplished artist in a few thousand years, especially towards the last phase of the Palaeolithic period. He made advances in painting, engraving and sculpture. Several caves containing these works of art have been discovered in France, Spain and Italy. In some caves there are multi-coloured drawings on the walls and ceilings which are almost 'picture galleries'. These paintings and engravings show herds of running bisons, horses, bears, reindeers and mammoths, and interesting hun ing scenes. Human and animal figures have also been found engraved on bones and ivory. Palaeolithic art attained great heights and is regarded with admiration even today.

The paintings are mostly found deep in the caves, where sunlight does not reach. It is so dark there that the pictures could have been drawn only by the light of a torch or a fire. If these pictures were drawn for pleasure, they would not have been painted in such dark and narrow places. In fact, these caves with the paintings on the walls look almost like temples.

This has led scholars to suppose that the paintings had a magical purpose. Hunting was a daily occupation of the Palaeolithic man. His food primarily depended upon his success with game. Several pictures show animals dying, with spears in their sides. This was what man wished to happen when he went hunting. The paintings might have given him a sense of power over the animals he would meet in the open.

This view is also supported by the practices common among primitive people

1.8 Cave Painting of Prehistoric Man

of today. They engrave or paint on rocks as part of the rites and ceremonies they perform at birth, at death, at coming of age and at the time of marriage. They dance, masked, during hunting rites to help them kill animals difficult to find or kill.

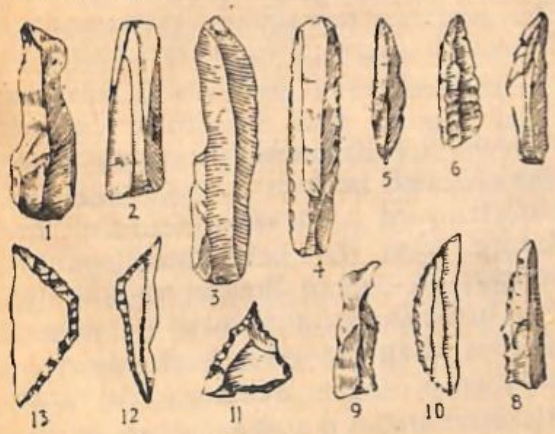
The practice of art, whatever its purpose, gave Palaeolithic man a sense of beauty. He decorated personal belongings and engraved tools. He beautified his body with necklaces, pins and bracelets made of ivory, bone, stone, and shell. The implements he made of bone included knives, harpoons, and spearheads.

In India, at a number of places, paintings have been found in rock shelters. While it is difficult to date most of these, the paintings at Madhya Pradesh, are believed to be of the Stone Age.

THE NEOLITHIC AGE

The Transition Stage

Man made significant advances in the Middle Stone, or *Mesolithic* Age which separated the Palaeolithic times from the Neolithic (New Stone) Age. In this age, the glaciers were shrinking and the areas formerly covered by ice were gradually becoming thickly forested. Big animals moved away, but the dog was domesticated by man and helped him in hunting game. The Mesolithic Age is marked by the wide use of small tools known as *microliths*, some of which were used as spearheads and arrow heads. The Mesolithic people also used the sledge as a means of transport over snow and ice. They harvested the foodgrains which grew wild in some regions. It is possible that the Mesolithic people of Palestine also practised cultivation to some extent.



1.9 Microliths

Beginning of Farming

The change from food-gathering to food-producing did not come about suddenly; it grew gradually out of the practices of the Mesolithic people. We know that plants grow from seed, but this was not so obvious to man in those days. He saw plants growing around him fertilized naturally year by year. Ancient man took these things for granted and harvested ripened grain, not knowing yet that grain could be planted. When fertility was exhausted and the soil gave little or no crops, he would move on to new lands that bore grain.

Perhaps, one day someone observed that the grain swept from the threshing and deposited on the dung heap sprouted and in time produced golden grain. It required close observation to see how the plant grew from a seed. The man who first tried to grow plants from a seed may be considered the first great scientist.

In the early stages of agriculture, man could sow and resow the same plot of land year after year till the soil lost its fertility. He had no idea of fertilizing the soil with manure. He simply moved to a new area, cleared the land and cultivated it in the old way till that land, too, was worn out. This method of shifting agriculture is still

practised in some areas. More permanent settlements developed in areas which nature fertilized year after year with the silt from floods or decayed matter.

There is evidence to show that agriculture was first practised in Thailand and in the well-watered valleys on the borders of the Arabian and Iranian deserts known as the Fertile Crescent. The Fertile Crescent is the original home of sheep, goats, pigs and cattle, where wheat and barley grew as wild grass.

Also, in West Asia, in Palestine, people had developed a high level of Mesolithic culture. The stratified excavations at Jericho, in Palestine, have revealed three levels of culture which lie above the remains of Palaeolithic times.

These show the later development of a settled village life. Jericho had well-constructed huts, with walls of bricks and stone built all round the village for defence against enemies. It is estimated that this settlement, which had a population as large as 3000, grew up about 7000 B.C. The bones of numerous animals found there show that the people kept herds of domesticated animals, especially goats. The goat appears to have been the second species of animal, after the dog, to be tamed.

Numerous ruins of agricultural villages, similar to Jericho and more or less of the same age, have been discovered in north Syria, Iraq and Iran. These discoveries have left no doubt that the domestication of animals and cultivation of cereals spread very rapidly from Palestine to these countries and then, about 5000 B.C, to the Nile Valley in Egypt. The change-over from hunting and food gathering to farming and stock-breeding took place in India later.

Development of Settlements

Scholars think that the Neolithic Age started when man had completely adopted the Mesolithic invention of agriculture. In the Neolithic Age man's life was so completely transformed that the age is termed the 'Neolithic Revolution' . When he took to agriculture, he soon found that it was not enough to plant seeds.

The growing plants had to be tended. At the same time, man was no longer compelled to move from place to place to seek areas where game was plentiful. He could now keep large herds of cattle which he could always kill for food.

Agriculture, thus, paved the way for a settled life. Men started living in pit dwellings, mud houses made of wooden posts with thatched roofs.

The settlements were generally near the fields which the people cultivated. These settelements gradually developed into villages and even small fortified towns. Settled life led also to the development of organized social life.

Neolithic culture which started in Asia spread much later to Europe. Much is known of developments in Europe from the Lake Dwellings of Switzerland, where houses were built close to the shores of the lakes and raised on piles when the water level rose. The remains of these dwellings are well preserved and give a clear picture of the life of the dwellers.

1.10 Lake Dwellings of Switzerland

Development of Mixed Farming

How the domestication of animals began is not known. Perhaps, there were large numbers of animals in areas near water where men also were concentrated. Here man could observe the animals and study their habits, and this knowledge must have enabled him to tame them. It was, again, easy for an agricultural people to domesticate animals and feed them on the husks of the grain that were left after threshing. In any event, sheep and goats, pigs and cattle-and later, horses and asses—were tamed and kept in pens. Man, thus, obtained food from the soil and also from animals. In the pens, the animals could be observed even more closely. Calves suckling milk must have given man the idea that he too could get food other than meat from cows and goats. This practice which combines agriculture with the raising of animals is known as 'mixed farming'. Animals, however, were chiefly used to provide meat and milk; they were yet to be used as beasts of burden or to draw the plough.

The development of agriculture brought varied changes. It became necessary to conserve the food that was not immediately used. The whole crop could not be consumed as soon as it was reaped: it had to last over the whole year, till the next harvest, with a part of it set aside for seed. Grain storage bins have, thus, been found even in the earliest Neolithic settlements. Similarly, livestock could not be slaughtered thoughtlessly. The young cows must be spared and reared to provide milk and to increase the herd. The increasing surplus provided food during bad seasons and crop failures and also supported a growing population. It was the dependable and increasing supply of food in an agricultural economy that led to the growth of population. Villages became larger and some grew into towns.

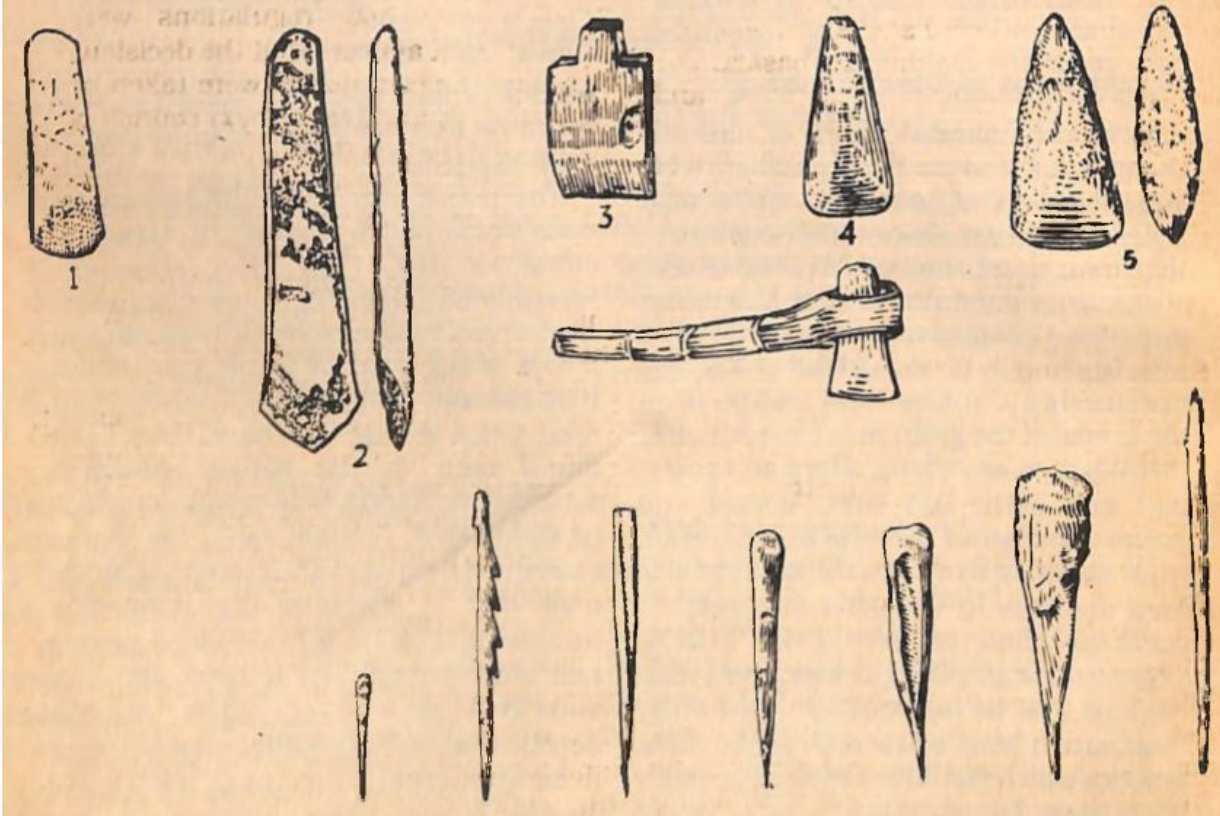
Polished Stone Tools

Neolithic tools are distinguished from the Palaeolithic chiefly on account of their higher utility and more skilful construction. An important tool of the Neolithic times was the polished stone celt. It was made of a large piece of fine-grained stone. One end of it was ground down and polished to sharpen the cutting edge. By fixing it into the end of a stick, it could be used as an axe. It was used to clear forests and as a hoe to till the land. It also enabled man to cut and shape timber, which led to the growth of carpentry. The knowledge of carpentry thus gained was to be used for making ploughs, wheels, plank boats, and wooden houses.

Another important tool of the Neolithic people was the sickle. This was made of a wooden handle into which blades of flint flakes were set. It was used to cut and gather the crop. There were, however, great improvements in the weapons of war and hunting. The bow and arrow continued to be used, although arrowheads were made sharper. In some areas, people used a new weapon, the sling. The Neolithic man also started making use of bone and antler for making tools like needles and harpoons.

Invention of Pottery

To store and cook food, vessels were needed which could hold grains and liquids as well as stand heat. At the



1.11 Stone and bone tools of the Neolithic Age

beginning of Neolithic times, baskets made of straw and twigs were used to store fruits and dry things. These were smeared with mud to hold liquids. It may have so happened that such a basket fell into the fire by accident, with the result that the straw was burnt out while the layer of clay was left standing in the shape of a dish hardened by the fire. This dish of baked clay was found to be waterproof; the clay neither mixed with water nor was washed away. In this way, perhaps, man got the idea of making and baking pottery. Man became a creator. He could turn clay into stone.

The Neolithic people who knew how to make baskets with round strips or ropes of fibre learned to make coiled pots. They coiled long, thin ropes of clay—well mixed with sand, powdered shells and chopped straw—as in the making of a basket. The coils were then pressed together and ridges smoothed out with wet hands and pebbles. These people soon learned to bake their pots in a very hot fire, above 600°C. This made them hard and more waterproof. The invention of clay pottery is a characteristic of all Neolithic cultures.

Spinning and Weaving

Among the remains of the earliest Neolithic villages in West Asia, we find the beginnings of a textile industry. Clothes woven of linen, cotton and wool had started replacing skins and skirts of leaves. Cotton was grown in the Indus Valley soon after 3000 B.C. Wool was used in Iran about the same time. But, before textiles or woven cloth could be made, the two processes of spinning and weaving had to be invented and used together. The invention of the distaff and spindle for spinning, and of the loom, an elaborate machine for weaving, are great triumphs of human intelligence.

Improvements in Community Life

Settled life and cultivation gave man leisure; he had no longer to think always of getting food. During spare time he could make stone tools, hoes, or pots and weave cloth. Some people spared from producing their own food could even devote themselves to other activities all the time. This resulted in a division of labour. The division of labour made it possible for various groups to specialize, that is, to acquire greater skill and learn better techniques in doing one kind of work.

The settled community life needed rules to regulate the behaviour of the members of the community. It is not possible to know exactly how regulations were established. It appears that the decisions regarding the community were taken by the people as a whole, or by a council of elders, as is the practice in tribal societies. There were perhaps no kings or any organized government. Most likely, there were chiefs elected by the community for their qualities of leadership. But, these chiefs could not pass their positions on to their sons and they enjoyed few special privileges. Archaeological excavations have not revealed anything which would indicate the prevalence of a higher status for some members of the community. This is also supported by the study of life in many tribes in modern times. Thus, social inequalities do not seem to have emerged even in Neolithic times.

It appears that cultivated land was regarded as the property of the community as a whole. The community gave plots of land to individual families to cultivate, or the entire community worked on the common fields. It is likely, however, that the ownership of land gradually passed

into the hands of individual families and plots of lands became family property instead of belonging to the whole community. Houses, pots and ornaments must also have been the property of individual families.

Religious Beliefs of the Neolithic People

The system of burying the dead provides some indication of the religious beliefs of the Neolithic people. The dead were buried with weapons, pottery, food and drink in their graves, in the belief that they would require these things even after death. Such graves are found in the Palaeolithic period also. Perhaps in the Neolithic period, there was a change in the significance of the graves. The earth now provided food for the community. The spirits of dead ancestors who lay under the earth were supposed to assist in the growth of crops.

There is also evidence of the beliefs in *totems*. A totem is the image of an animal or a plant as a symbol for a clan, or group of families living together. In early times people believed that animals and men had the same ancestor and that animals, by providing food for men were 'a friend or relative'. Even after man had taken to agriculture, his life was not entirely secure. There was always the danger of some catastrophe destroying his crops, livestock and game. These conditions of insecurity and man's inability to understand the processes of nature led to the belief that the welfare of the community was bound up with an animal and was completely dependent upon it. Such beliefs developed about trees and plants also. Men chose animals and trees to be their totems, their ancestors and protectors.

Every tribe had its own totem. It tried to keep on friendly terms with its totem, and the members of the tribe asked its totem for favours. The sun, the moon, stars, and other forces of nature were also believed to have special powers and man also tried to please them through worship. In course of time, this worship became elaborate rituals, as magic and religious beliefs tied the members of the community to one another. These and other similar beliefs expressed man's feeling of helplessness in the face of things he could not understand or explain.

1.12 The Stonehenge, England

Small clay figurines of women have been found in many Neolithic settlements in many parts of the world. These figurines are called 'mother goddesses'. When man began to cultivate the soil, the earth became the 'mother' and the figurines were worshipped in the belief that the fertility of land would increase. Music and art of the Neolithic people, like the cave art of the Palaeolithic man, were similarly related to the hopes and fears of man.

The burial places of some of the communities in Neolithic Age and of some in later periods were marked with *megaliths*, or large stones. Such places have been found in western Europe and south India. Some of these appear as single, huge standing stones; others look like tabletops set on several high stones or boulders. Under these table-like structures are chambers containing the dead. These megaliths in some places were also used for building a kind of temple to worship the sun-god at the time of summer solstice when the sun's power is at its greatest. One such structure is the famous Stonehenge in England. Here large stones were fitted to form a semi-circle, part of which was capped to form a doorway.

1.13 Wheel—its evolution and uses. a. The first wheels cut from logs. b. Making pottery on the potter's wheel. c. Egyptian wheel used in chariots. d. Sumerian chariot.

Invention of the Wheel

About this time, perhaps, man invented the wheel which brought about a technological revolution. It is difficult to imagine what we would do without the wheel. Its invention must have undergone many stages before it took on a usable form. The ultimate product must have been the result of improved carpentry. This was made possible by the discovery and use of metals.

The first use to which the wheel was put appears to be in the making of pottery. This is the potter's wheel and it must have made pottery a specialized craft. The wheel may then have been used in drawing a cart. Man had already learned the use of wheelless sledges. Huge, round trunks of trees were also rolled to carry heavy articles. The wheeled cart made transportation very much simpler and soon animals were used to draw it. The wheel was also used quite early in spinning.

The story of man from the remotest past to the growth of settled life is a story of progress. The pace of progress was slow in the beginning but became quicker with the Neolithic Age. In the Palaeolithic period man's central problem was how to keep himself alive. This problem, as with animals, took most of his time and effort. Yet, unlike animals, he could talk and make tools and, thus, took the first steps in his struggle to control his environment.

The pace of hman progress quickened by about 8000 B.C. with the coming of the Neolithic Age. Man became a food-producer and could change nature to suit his ends. Several inventions followed to pave the way for the development of civilization. Man now produced his own food by growing cereals. He domesticated animals, made kiln-fired pottery, produced cloth and developed techniques for making polished stone tools. Above all, he seems to have invented the wheel. All this enabled him to lead a settled life in an organized community. Co-operative living provided man with leisure and the opportunity to further increase his knowledge.

Starting in Western and South-East Asia, the Neolithic revolution spread to other lands, in the east and the west. The Neolithic village communities provided the basis for the emergence of civilization in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Explain the meaning of the following terms:
   Prehistoric times, Carbon-14 dating, Palaeolithic period, Mesolithic period, Neolithic period, geological eras, hominid, microliths, totem, megaliths, *Homo sapiens*, evolution of man, culture.
2. What is the work of an archaeologist, and anthropologist,a geologist, and a zoologist ? How does the work of each of these scientists help the historian in collecting facts about the pace of man's progress ?
3. Describe the principal characteristics that distinguish man from other animals. Give the names of five different species of prehistoric men.
4. Summarize the inventions and discoveries of the Stone Age man.

5. What are the differences between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods of the Stone Age as shown by man's tools and products ?

Things to do

1. Work out an appropriate scale for a Time Line on the classroom wall and show on it approximate dates of the following:
   Beginning of the earth, appearance of life on earth, appearance of mammals, appearance of man, beginning of recorded history, invention of fire, beginning of settled life. Discuss the pace of man's progress as the completed Time Line pictures it.
2. On the outline map of Eurasia, locate the sites where the Stone Age cultures have been found.
3. Visit a museum and study any materials on display—tools, utensils, drawings—that help us to understand the Stone Age culture. Prepare a list of the objects you see, with a sentence or two describing each.
4. Draw sketches to show possible stages in man's progress in the following areas :
   (i) Improvements in tools;
   (ii) Development of the wheel.

Things to think about and discuss

1. What can we learn about the change in our lives today by studying the causes of the change in the life of early man ?
2. Do you think change is more, or less, rapid in man's life today than in prehistoric times ? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Why do the changes from food-gathering to food-producing and from hunting to domesticating animals represent such big advances in the progress of man ?
4. What would be the possible results of eliminating the uses of fire and the wheel from modern man's everyday activities ?
5. Do you think it would be possible for man to live anywhere today exactly as the Stone Age man lived? Why, or why not ?

CHAPTER 2

Bronze Age Civilizations

MAN had taken an important step towards progress during the Neolithic Age when he took to agriculture, began to make more efficient tools for his many needs and started living a more or less settled life. In about 4000 B.C., the accumulated knowledge and skills of the preceding thousands of years, combined with many new inventions, enabled man to advance to a new stage in his progress—the stage of civilization. The most important feature of a society when it reaches the stage of civilization is the emergence of cities. The rise of cities is accompanied by so many far-reaching changes in every aspect of life that this development is described as a revolution in human history—the *Urban Revolution*. The first civilizations began to emerge in some parts of the world in about 4000 B.C., or about 6000 years ago. The archaeologists, through their work during the last 200 years, have given us fascinating accounts of these first civilizations.

It is interesting to note that most of the first civilizations arose in certain river valleys. This happened because conditions in these areas were favourable to the development of civilization. There was plenty of rich soil in these areas, which could be easily worked. The water required for cultivation was available in abundance and the floods enriched the soil every year. The farmer was able to produce much more foodstuffs than he required for his subsistence. People had to work together for the proper use of water. Draining flood waters, building dykes and digging canals were the activities that demanded work on a co-operative basis and a high degree of organization.

In course of time man discovered another use of the river. The river is 'nature's road' and man learned to construct boats and carry himself and his loads on rivers.

The settled life meant that the homes and hearths had to be protected from nomadic invaders. Men no longer had to devote all their energies to the problems of producing food. Some were able to devote themselves to the study and development of mathematics, engineering,

metallurgy and other branches of knowledge on systematic lines. Trade developed as man searched for raw materials and came into contact with others for the exchange of goods. Leisure promoted architecture and sculpture, music and dance.

Use of Metals—Copper and Bronze

The discovery and the use of metals are of great importance in the history of mankind. They mark the transition to civilization. Metals provided man with a material which was more durable than stone and could be worked for making a variety of tools, implements and weapons to meet his growing needs. The first metal to be discovered and used for making tools was copper. For a long time stone tools continued to be in use along with copper tools in some parts of the world. The period when man used both stone and copper tools is known as the *Chalcolithic period*. The word *chalcolithic* is formed from *chalkas* meaning copper, and *lithos*, meaning stone.

In the early stages, man did not know about the copper ore, which is recovered from mines. He used only native copper which was collected from the river banks. The earliest use of native copper is believed to have started in about 5000 B.C. Later, man learned to extract copper from the ore from mines. The earliest use of copper extracted from the ore began in Sumer in southern Iraq in about 4500 B.C. Some of the areas where the first civilizations developed did not have copper of their own. The people of these civilizations went to far away lands to get it. This resulted in the growth of trade and helped in bringing together people from different lands.

In course of time, man learned to mix copper with tin or zinc to produce the alloy called bronze. Bronze gave man better service than copper. It is harder than copper and is thus more useful in making strong tools, weapons and implements. The bronze ploughhead was a big improvement over the old hoe. The bronze tools and the use of hammer helped in improving carpentry and led to the invention of the wheel. Because of the importance of bronze in the growth of the first civilizations, the period of the first civilizations is also known as the Bronze Age and these civilizations are called Bronze Age civilizations.

The discovery of metals ultimately put an end to the large scale use of stone implements, though we find both stone tools and metal tools in use for a time. The use of metals enabled man to fashion a variety of tools to meet his different needs. And while metal tools improved craftsmanship, it, in turn, produced new tools and new crafts.

Gradually metallurgy or the systematic method of extracting ores and preparing the metal for making tools advanced. The use of metals required specialization of skills and knowledge. Soon there arose an important section in society—workers, who were specialized in metal work.

Common Features of Early Civilizations

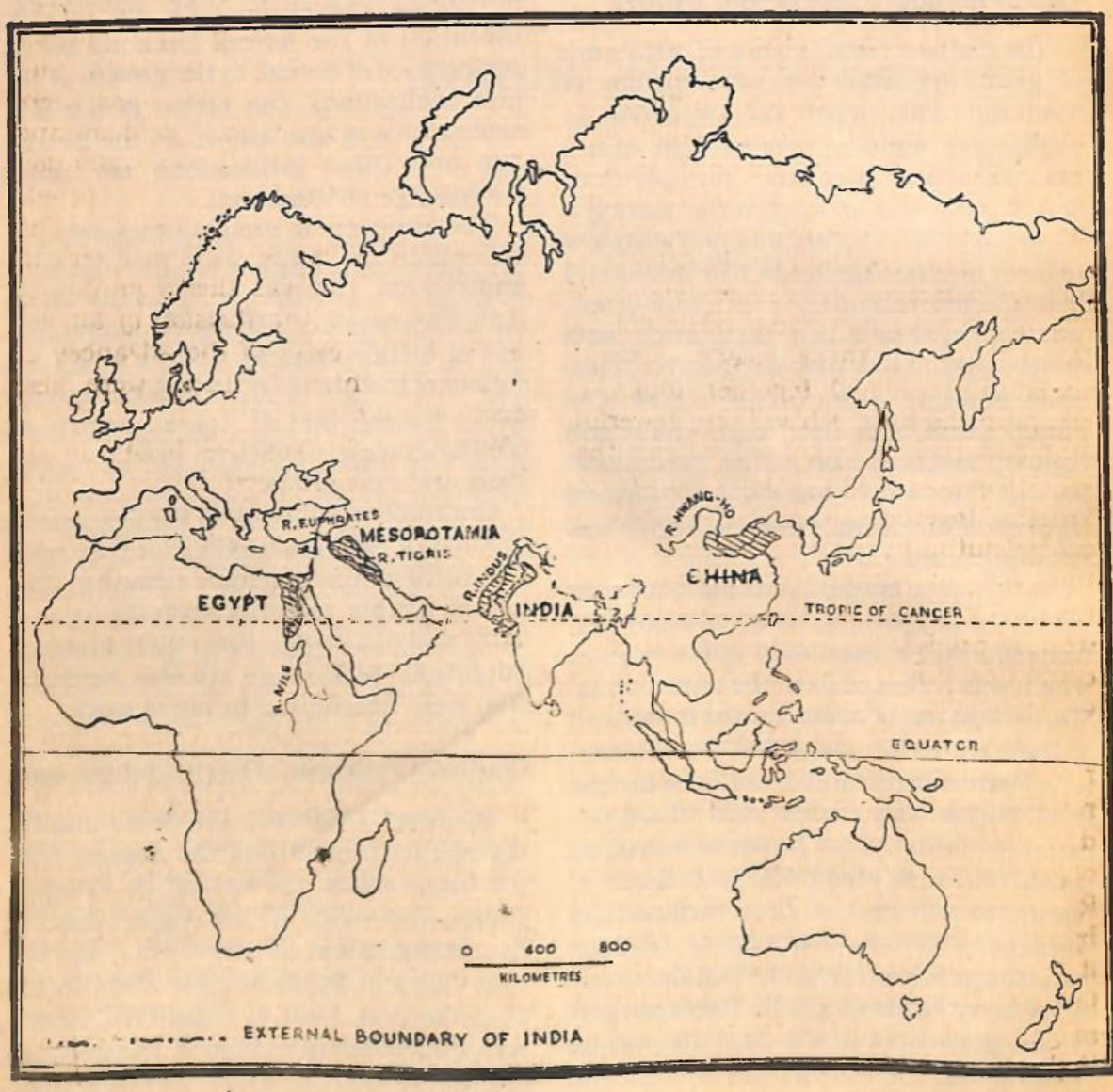
By about 2500 B.C., the areas around the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, the Indus valley, the Hwang-Ho valley in China, the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates in Iraq (Mesopotamia) and the Nile Valley in Egypt had become centres of civilization. Four of these civilizations are described in this chapter. Locate areas of these civilizations in the following map. These civilizations had certain common features, although each developed a unique

character in its own contribution to human progress.

Each civilization developed an organized political and social system, trade and commerce, complex religious beliefs, writing systems, art and science and mathematics. In this chapter you will read about some of these aspects of each civilization.

Improvement in Agriculture

Farmers in a civilization have to produce more food than they need for themselves. This was not possible in



The Bronze Age Civilizations

Neolithic times when the field was small and cultivation was carried on with a hoe. Only after the introduction of the plough and irrigation, large-scale production was made possible. With a wooden plough, drawn first by man and later by animal, a far larger area could be cultivated than was possible earlier.

The requirements of irrigation also helped in the growth of civilization. The land near the rivers had to be cleared of jungles to make it suitable for cultivation. Channels to drain the marshes had to be dug. Dykes had to be put up to protect settlements from floods. An elaborate system of canals was necessary to ensure a regular supply of water for the fields. For all this, a large-scale co-operative effort was needed. A small village could not do this. To meet these needs, several communities joined together under a central authority which was very powerful and could enforce its will. Thus the requirements of irrigation helped in bringing together many people under a central authority or government in cities. Increase in agricultural production resulted in freeing many people from the work of producing their own food. They could now live in cities and specialize in various skills.

Rise of Cities, Trade, Government—The rise of cities leads to a number of far-reaching changes. Life in a city is quite different from life in a village. In ancient cities as in modern, people could not grow food for themselves. All food was produced by the people living in villages and part of it was brought to the cities. The village farmers, therefore, had to produce much more food than they needed for themselves. Trade also developed. People wanted goods made by others and they had to give something in return. In the earliest times it appears that goods were exchanged. As civilization advanced, some sort of money was used in these transactions. Thus, the idea of both trade and money developed as a result of city life.

There were other developments, too. As the people in the cities did not have to grow their own food, they were free to do other things. Gradually groups of people took to different occupations and specialized in certain skills. Soon there were artisans and traders, soldiers and officials who devoted their whole attention to one occupation. By doing so people developed new skills and new tools and learned to use some better than others. In other words this was the beginning of specialization or the *division of labour*. This was the result of the advances in technology which, in turn, were also promoted by it.

When people in cities began to be engaged in different occupations, they did not have the same interests. In other words, city life became a complex affair. An organization was needed to regulate public life and such an organization came into being. It had the responsibility to keep order, to make laws, and to look after the affairs of the city. It needed a body of persons to carry it on. In course of time, societies had governors and kings, and what we now call government arose in its earliest form.

A highly developed organization like a government has to make and record laws, maintain accounts, decide disputes and communicate with the people it is governing. Thus some form of writing has to be devised. Each of the four civilizations described in this chapter had some sort of script. And writing marks the beginning of the historical period.

THE HARAPPAN CULTURE

The first civilization in India arose in the north-western regions of the Indian subcontinent. It is known as the Harappan Culture after the name of a major site of this civilization, Harappa. It was also called the Indus civilization because some of its important sites which were excavated first, are located in the valley of the river Indus.

The Harappan culture is not the oldest of the Bronze Age civilizations. It is being described here first because it is the first known civilization in India. It seems to have flourished about 2500 B.C. and extended over a bigger area than any of the contemporary civilizations. The map shows its approximate boundaries. Evidences of this civilization are found in Baluchistan, Sind, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Western Uttar Pradesh.

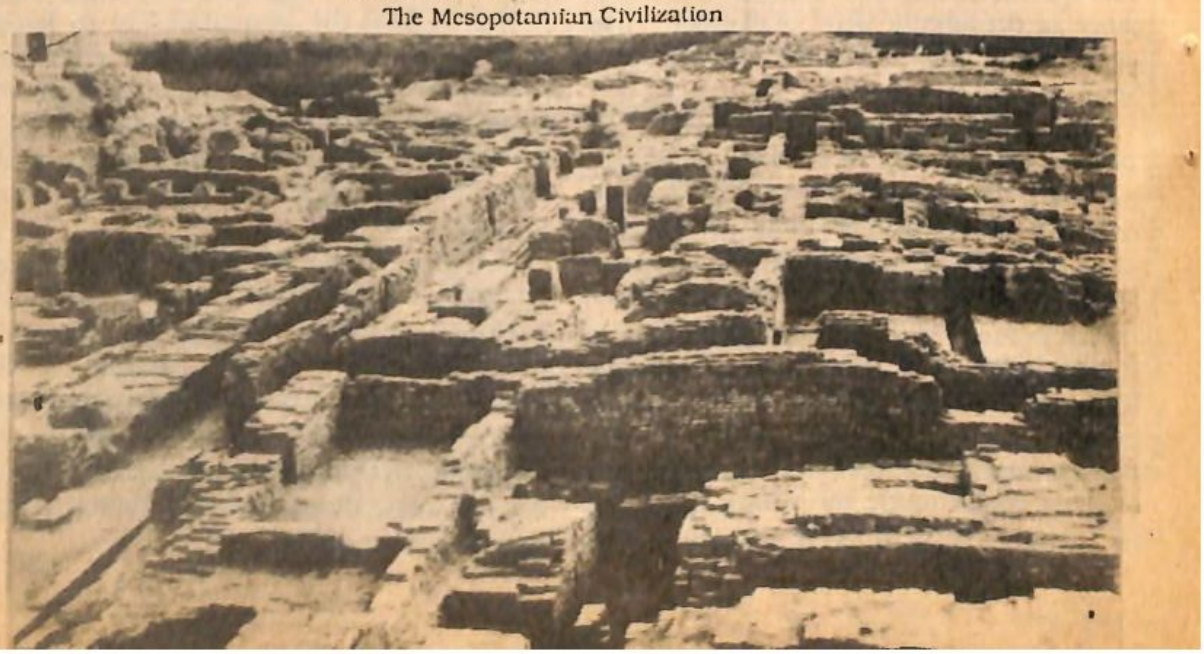
The existence of this civilization was revealed in the 1920's. This discovery at once pushed back the history of India by at least a thousand years. The first sites of this civilization discovered were Harappa in the Punjab and Mohenjodaro in Sind. Both these sites are now in Pakistan. Since then, other sites have been found, the most important of which are Rupar in the Punjab, Kalibangan in Rajasthan, Lothal in Gujarat and Banavali in Haryana.

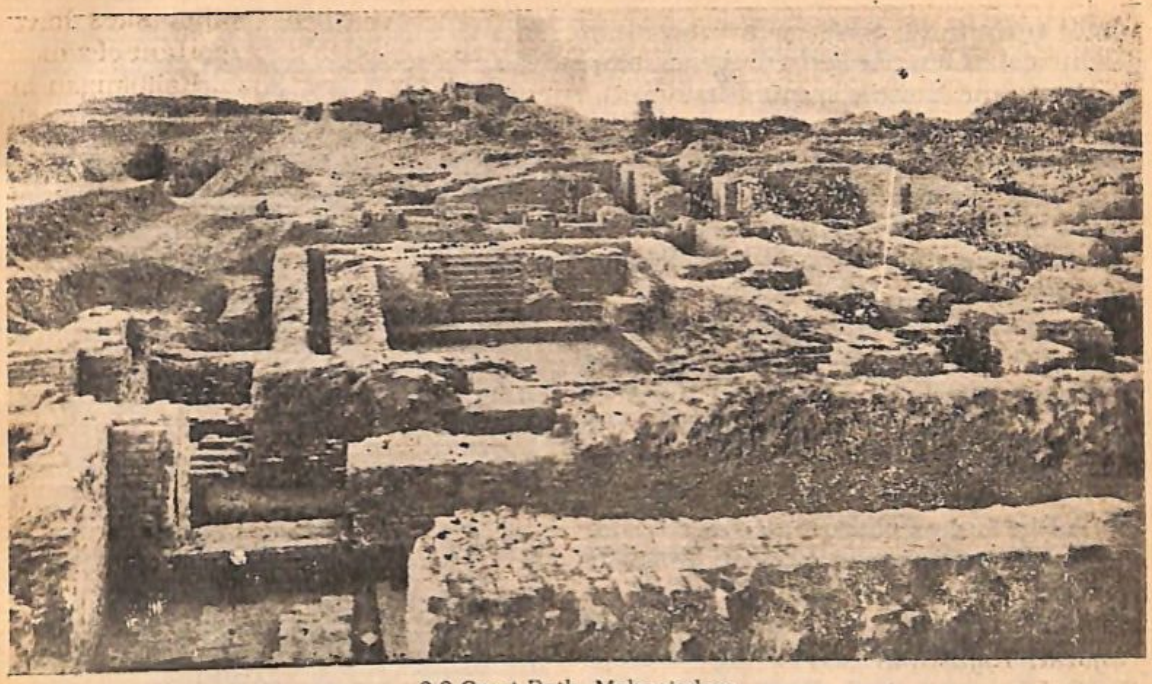
Scholars are not agreed on how this civilization began; however, there is evidence of earlier agricultural

The Harappan Culture

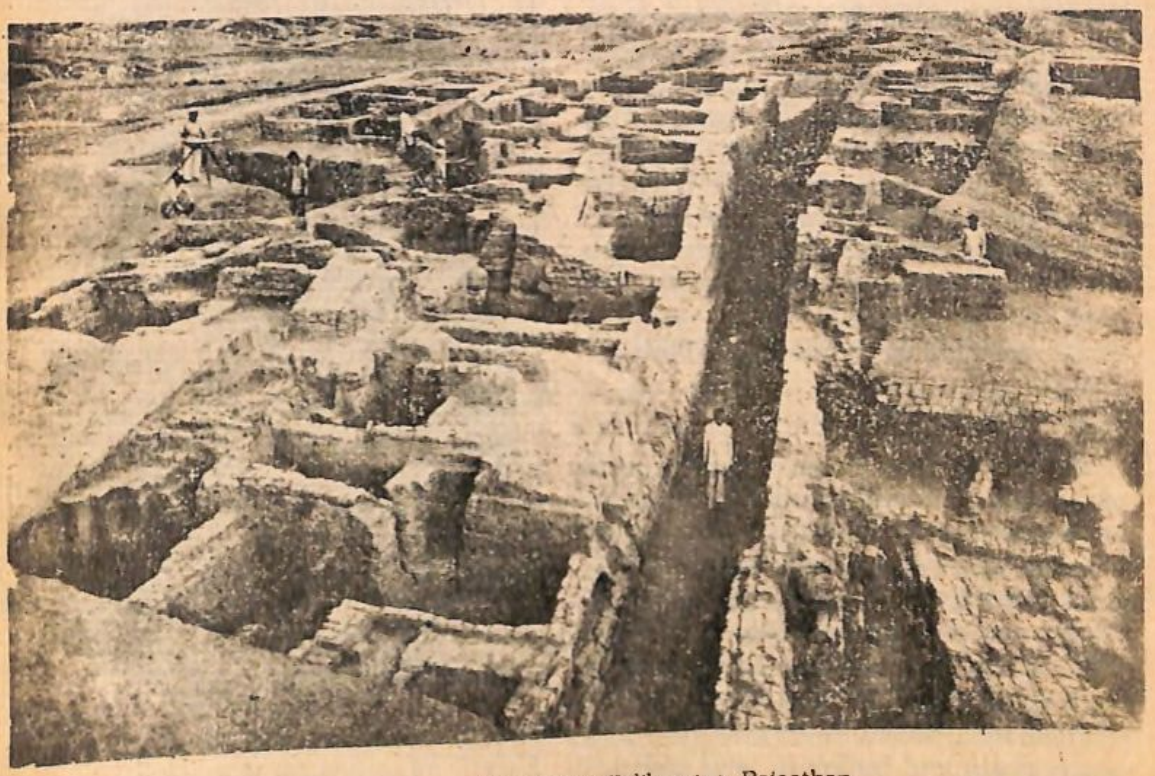
2.1 Remains of houses in Mohenjodaro

The Mesopotamian Civilization





2.2 Great Bath, Mohenjodaro



2.3 A view of remains of houses in Kalibangan, Rajasthan

communities in some areas such as Baluchistan and Rajasthan. It may have evolved from these communities.

Cities of the Harappan Culture

Harappa and Mohenjodaro were well planned and thickly populated. The roads were straight and wide and cut each other at right angles. The main road in Mohenjodaro was about 10 metres wide and 800 metres long. The houses were situated along the roads and made of burnt bricks; some had more than one storey. Every house was furnished with a well and a bathroom. The drainage system found in Mohenjodaro was magnificent, and the house drains emptied all waste water into the street drains.

In Mohenjodaro a great tank, now called the Great Bath, was found. A flight of steps led to the water and all round the tank were small rooms. In Harappa has been found what is now known as the Citadel. It stood on raised ground and contained structures that seem to have been public buildings. Most of the cities had huge granaries, perhaps to store grain from the countryside. Lothal had a structure which according to some archaeologists, was a dockyard. This indicates that Lothal may have been an important trading centre to which even foreign boats used to come.

Life of the People

The occupations followed by the people of the Harappan culture are not definitely known. Most of the people, however, were farmers, who lived beyond the walls of the cities. They grew wheat, barley and peas. Cotton was also cultivated and probably cotton fabric was common. Fish seems to have been caught for food. Domesticated animals included humped and humpless cattle, goats and buffaloes, and possibly elephants. But it appears that the horse was not used on any significant scale.

The Harappan pottery was made on the wheel, a sign of an advanced culture. Some fine specimens of pottery have been discovered. These reveal the high artistic achievements of the Harappan potters. The variety of shapes and sizes is amazing. A large variety of clay toys have been dug up in the various sites of the Harappan culture. Models of carts with wheels, and animals yoked to them, and of birds with

2.4 Painted Pottery, Lothal

long stick-like legs, figures with moveable arms, and clay bulls with nodding heads have been found.

The people used metals for their implements and utensils. They also used the earthen pots of various shapes and sizes that they turned out on the potter's wheel. The bronze figure of a dancing girl found at Mohenjodaro is a wonderful example of their workmanship. Archaeologists have discovered hundreds of seals decorated with beautiful figures of animals, such as the bull, rhinoceros, tiger and elephant.

Various objects of Harappan culture like beads, a golden monkey on a pin, and seals have been recovered in Mesopotamia. These findings reveal that there was a direct trade link between the Indus civilization and Mesopotamia. There is no written evidence to explain the nature of merchandise, or the exact traffic arrangements. To avoid the difficulties of overland routes, trade was carried on by sea, Dilmun or modern Bahrein being the great centre of exchange between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia. We infer that the Harappan traders took pottery, grains, cotton goods, spices, stone beads, pearls and eye-paint and brought back metalwares . We can visualize small boats as depicted in the Harappan seals, sailing along the coasts of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

It is obvious that the Indus people had an efficient government but the present state of our knowledge does not tell us much about it. Some scholars think that since no palaces have been discovered, the cities had no kings, and that a body of important men managed government affairs.

Not much is known about the religion of these people. A large number of seals depicts the humped bull which may have been considered sacred. The impression of a god-like being on a seal is believed to be an early form of the Hindu god, Siva. Small figures of a goddess have been found. The Great Bath in Mohenjodaro might have been a place of religious bathing. The dead were either buried or cremated.

2.5 Seals of the Harappan culture.

The seals unearthed are the most distinctive products of the Harappan culture. Some of them are square tablets of clay, with boss on one side and engraving on the other. After cutting they were glazed over. Animals, such as the bull, rhino, tiger, elephant and crocodile, have been engraved very vividly and beautifully. Some of the seals have inscriptions, but the script has not yet been deciphered. The extraordinary skill in moulding the animal figures with minute details is very impressive. What were these seals used for? There is no definite answer to this question.

End of the Harappan Culture

By 1500 B.C., the Harappan culture came to an end. How or why, is not known. Among the various causes ascribed to the end of the Harappan culture are floods, gradual decay of the culture and the arrival of a new people, the Aryans. However, there is no unanimity among scholars on this question.

The Harappan culture must have been a glorious one. After the coming of the Aryans, the cities were deserted and became only mounds to be unearthed

about 3500 years later. India was not to see such magnificent cities for a thousand years. Town-planning seems to have been completely forgotten. However, some aspects of the beliefs and practices of the Harappan people lived on. The worship of Siva and the mother goddess and the practice of religious bathing are examples of continuing traditions of the Harappan culture.

In many parts of India, the Neolithic phase was followed by the emergence of Chalcolithic (copper-stone) cultures. A number of sites of these cultures have been found in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and eastern India. Though most of these cultures belong to a period after that of the Harappan culture, they were much less advanced than the Harappan culture. They neither had any cities nor systems of writing. The use of iron which began in India in about 1000 B.C. brought about many changes in the life of the Indian people and helped in the growth of Indian civilization.

THE MESOPOTAMIAN CIVILIZATION

Though the Harappan culture is nearer home, the Mesopotamian is older. In several aspects of life, Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) led the way and other civilizations followed.

Mesopotamia means the 'land between the rivers'. It is watered by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Its southernmost region was, in ancient days, called Sumer. The regions to the north-east of Sumer were called Babylonia and Akkad. The highland in the north was Assyria. The Mesopotamians devised ways and means of a perennial irrigation system to keep the floods in check. The river-bed was high and the canals they made were very wide (25 metres in width sometimes) so that

while the water rushed from the river to the canal, the banks would not be destroyed. The canals were navigable channels and thus helped in transport as well as in irrigation.

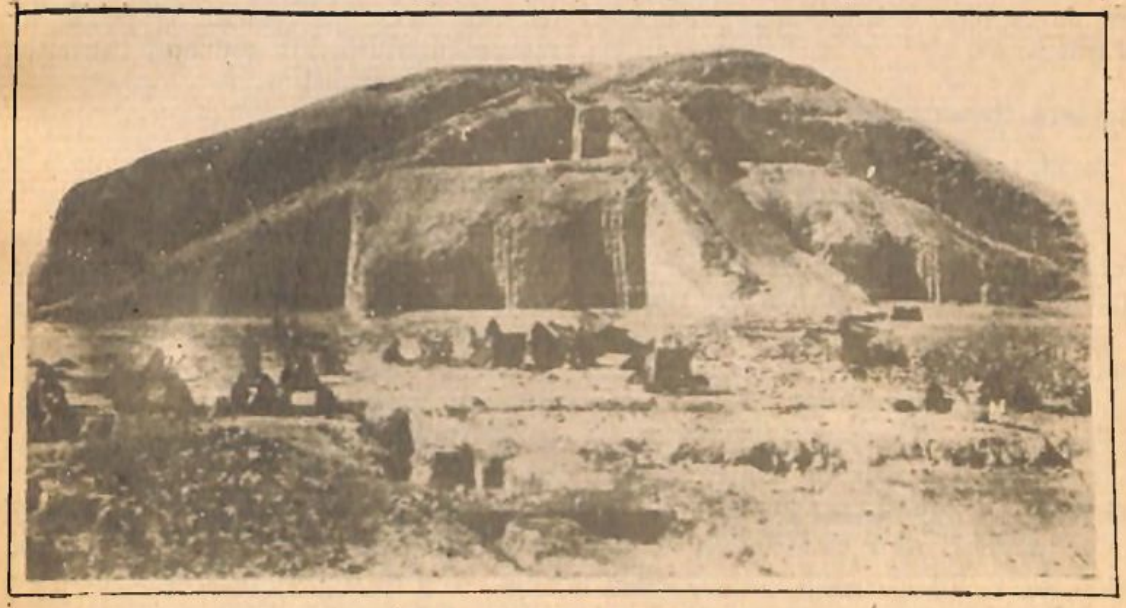
The Rise and Fall of Mesopotamian States

By about 3000 B.C., the Sumerian civilization had reached a high level of achievement. The cities in the region appear to have started as centres for the control of irrigation in the area and soon became centres of commerce and industry also. The most important of these cities were Erech, Eridu, Lagash, and Ur. Each was the capital of a small state, and the pattern of their cultures was similar. They were always fighting among themselves. By about 2600 B.C. the kings of Ur had become powerful and their influence spread to other regions also.

The people of Akkad had adopted many Sumerian ways and much of that culture. About 2500 B.C. a strong king combined Sumer and Akkad into one kingdom with its capital at Agade. Within about a hundred years, however, this kingdom was destroyed by invaders. The next notable event in the history of Mesopotamia is the rule of a new dynasty at Babylon. Hammurabi, the greatest Babylonian ruler, united the whole of what is now called Iraq into a single kingdom. By 1600 B.C. this kingdom was also destroyed, this time by the Hittites who came from Asia Minor, now Turkey. The Hittites were the first to make regular use of horses for war chariots and to make iron implements.

Mesopotamian Cities

The excavations at Ur, one of the greatest cities of Mesopotamia, reveal a complete picture of the city-state. It was divided into three main divisions : the sacred area, the walled city on the mound and the outer town. Every city had a patron-god of its own. The god of Ur was Nannar, the moon god. The temple of the



2.6. Remains of the Ziggurat at Ur

god, called *ziggurat* meaning the 'Hill of Heaven', was built of bricks on an artificial hill in the sacred area. The ziggurat in Ur was more than 20 metres high and in three storeys. The sacred area was also an administrative centre, and storehouses and offices have been found there. The ziggurat could be seen for miles around and all the citizens who lived in and around the city were aware of the 'divine presence' on the hill above them. The walled city and the outer town were the residential areas of the city.

Social Classes in Mesopotamia

In Mesopotamia, the king was regarded as the god's representative on earth, and the priests occupied the next place of importance. It is usually supposed that the priests were the rulers of the cities before there were kings. The kings' officers and scribes came next in the social scale. Merchants, landowners, craftsmen and shopkeepers formed the middle class. The lowest in the social level, of course, were the slaves, most of whom were prisoners of war.

Hammurabi's Code of Law

As life became more complex laws had to be made, added and changed to regulate the people's activities. Hammurabi gave his people a code or a system of laws. His code covered every aspect of life. It made a crime against one citizen, a crime against the whole state and the state fixed punishment for the offender. The code also recognized the division of society into rich men, poor men and slaves, and prescribed different punishments for different classes for the same crimes. Punishments were more severe if the victims of the crime belonged to the upper classes than if they were slaves of poor men. Hammurabi's famous edict shows him standing in reverence before his god and the laws written underneath it.

2.7 Hummurabi's Code depicted on stone

Mesopotamian Religious Beliefs and Practices

The Mesopotamians believed in a number of gods, but, each city had one special god as its patron. Rent from the land was collected and all government regulations were carried on in his name. His temple was maintained on a lavish scale and naturally the priests of this god came to enjoy wide powers.

As was common in ancient times, people believed in a kind of life after death. That is why they put food and other necessities of daily life into graves. This

practice appears to have been discontinued in Sumer and the dead were buried in the backyard of the houses. This has led scholars to think that the dead were thus looked upon as protectors of families and perhaps also worshipped in the home.

Occupations, Arts and Crafts in Mesopotamia

Agriculture was the occupation of most Mesopotamians. Before metals were used on a large scale, they had sickles of baked clay. These were baked hard and did not break easily. To ensure a permanent supply of water for the fields, the people diverted flood waters through canals to big reservoirs. They used cattle to draw the plough and took care to improve the livestock.

Mesopotamians usually wore clothes made of sheepskin. They also grew flax for linen and the cloth-making industry was carried on by a special class of workers-spinners, weavers and dyers.

A vast hoard of metal objects has been discovered in the royal cemetery at Ur. They include statues which adorned the temples of gods, vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, silver harps, golden helmets, beautifully inlaid furniture, exquisitely designed necklaces, bracelets, and other jewellery. This shows that, by 2500 B.C., metal workers had developed very high technical knowledge and skill.

The potter's wheel was perhaps first used in Mesopotamia. Before it was used, pottery was made by hand. But, Mesopotamian pottery is not as good as the Harappan pottery. The Mesopotamians also seem to have been the first to make glassware.

Trade and Commerce

The prosperity of the Mesopotamians depended largely on foreign trade. The people had to get raw materials from outside, then they made goods and sold them both at home and abroad. The raw materials they imported included stone and timber of good quality and gold, silver and other metals. For these they exchanged their surplus foodgrains.

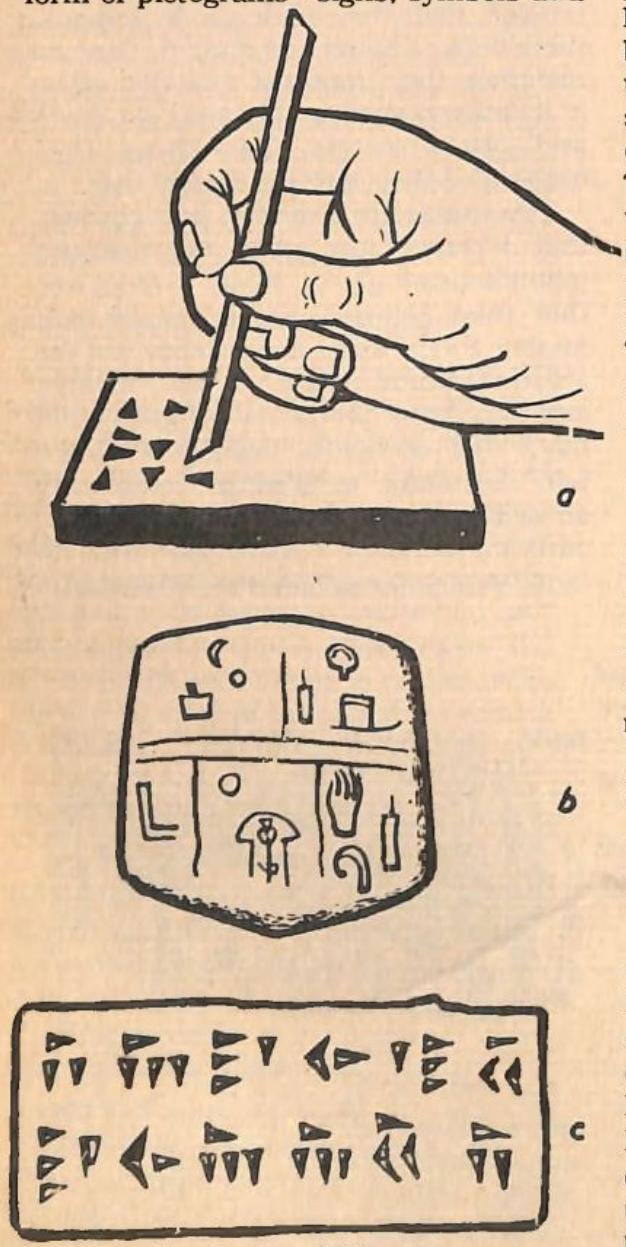
Two things are essential for a country that depends even partly on trade and manufactured goods. First, it must see that manufactured goods are of high quality. So the kings and governors of the Mesopotamian city-states always supervised the production of goods and made rules so that all dealings would be fair. Secondly, a trading community should have good modes of transport to carry its products. For transportation on land, Mesopotamia had wheeled carts. Its

2.8 A Sumerian chariot drawn by wild asses

rivers and the many canals that had been dug for irrigation provided fine waterways. *Keleks*—rafts of logs tied together and buoyed up by inflated skins—were used to carry goods on water. There was extensive trading between the civilizations of Harappa and Mesopotamia.

Cuneiform Script

The first writing of the Mesopotamians was developed in Sumer and was in the form of pictograms—signs, symbols and pictures which denoted objects. Once the standard sign or picture was recognized as representing a definite object, communication became easy. However, a purely pictographic script is not of much help when ideas rather than objects are to be communicated. The Sumerians solved this difficulty by using certain pictures or signs to represent certain ideas—for example, the weight or volume of a thing. These symbols stood for ideas, names and words. They further developed their system of writing by making the script phonetic, that is, making the symbols represent syllables and sounds of a word. These symbols could then be combined in innumerable ways to represent objects, ideas and sounds.



2.9 Cuneiform Script a. Writing with a stylus b. Early Sumerian script c. Tablet showing cuneiform script

The Sumerians were the first to evolve a proper system of writing called *cuneiform*. The script is wedge-shaped, as shown in the illustration. They wrote with a sharp stylus made of reed on the smooth surface of clay tablets. The tablets were then baked until they became hard. Each tablet was like the page of a book. A large number of these tablets have been found. Most of them are business documents—letters, deeds of sale, contracts. Royal inscriptions and religious texts form another type of documents, but they are fewer.

It is interesting to know how the cuneiform script was deciphered. Henry Rawlinson, a British officer in Iran, was determined to read cuneiform. He discovered by chance an inscription, known as the Behistun Inscription, on a high rock. The inscription was at a height of about 100 metres and was very difficult to reach. But this did not stop Rawlinson. Every morning he used to go up on the rock, spend the whole day copying the inscription, and come down in the

evening. It took him several days to copy out the complete inscription. He then worked at it for twelve years before he succeeded in finding a key to the script. The ability to read the script, together with archaeological finds, has greatly enriched our knowledge of the Mesopotamian civilization.

The story of deciphering the lost scripts is a very interesting one, and it has been possible to read some of them only after scholars have patiently and tirelessly worked for years. However, some scripts as that of the Harappan culture remain undeciphered.

Growth in Knowledge

The people in Mesopotamia counted by sixties as we count by tens. Ours is the decimal system; their system was *sexagesimal*. They wrote the numbers 1 to 9 by making the sign for 1 and repeating it as many times as necessary. Similarly, they repeated the sign for 10 to represent multiples of 10. They had the same symbol for 60 as for 1, though it was written much bigger. When they had to write, for example, 153, they wrote 60 twice, 10 three times, and 1 three times. They also had a multiplication table of a sort. Their sexagesimal system of counting is no longer in use but we still use it as the basis of division of time into minutes and seconds and of a circle into 360 degrees. In geometry, the Mesopotamians had discovered what was later called the Pythagoras' theorem. This was of great help to Mesopotamians in building and in computing distances.

In astronomy, the Mesopotamians made astonishing progress. They could calculate the length of the day and the night, and the rising and setting of the sun and the moon. They divided the whole day into 24 hours, a time system followed all over the world. They divided the sky into twelve parts and assigned each a name. This has come down to us as the twelve signs of the *zodiac* or *rashis*, as we call them in India.

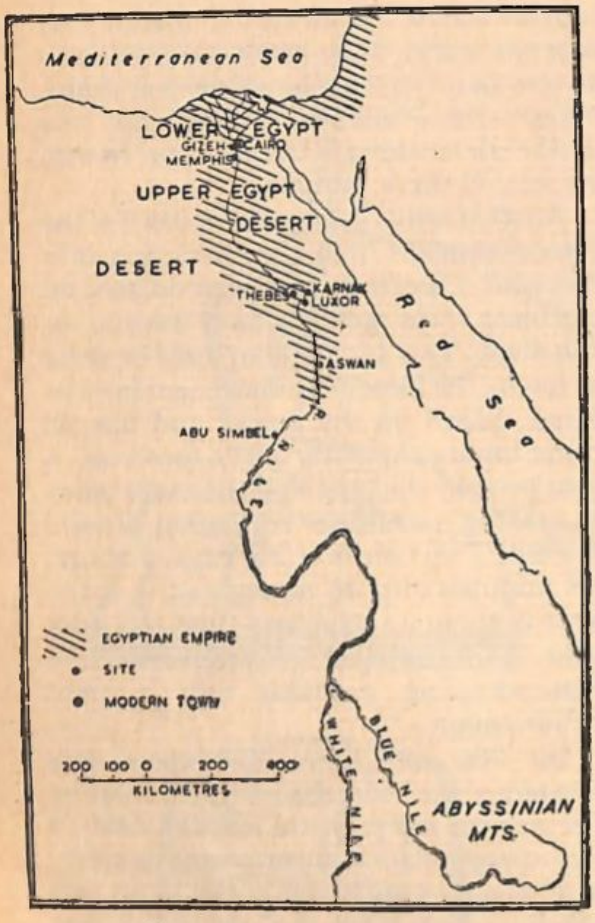
Another remarkable achievement of the Mesopotamians was the invention of a calendar. Calendars can be calculated on the basis of the movements of the sun, or the moon. That is calendars may be *solar* or *lunar*. The Mesopotamian calendar was lunar, based on the moon, and like all other lunar calendars, it was incorrect. A year is really the time that the earth takes in making a complete revolution around the sun. This time is of 365 days, 5 hours; 48 minutes and 46 seconds. The lunar year is about 11 days less than the solar year. But, in spite of this error, the Mesopotamian calendar was a great achievement.

By 750 B.C. there had come into existence the Assyrian empire. Nineveh became the finest city in western Asia– a city of vast palaces and imposing temples. The Assyrian greatness came to an end when nomads from the north and east destroyed Nineveh in the 7th and 6th centuries B.C.

THE EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

Egypt is called the 'Gift of the Nile'. Only a narrow strip of land along this river is green and fertile. It is in this area that civilization in Egypt emerged and grew.

Historians divide the history of Egypt into three periods : the *Old Kingdom*, the *Middle Kingdom* and the *New Kingdom*. The Old Kingdom is also called the Age of the Pyramids. During this period, Memphis, situated near modern



The Egyptian Civilization.
The map shows the approximate extent of the Egyptian empire in the 15th Century B.C.

Cairo, was the capital. The civilization of Egypt with its advances in art, religion, and sciences was developed during the period 3000-2000 B.C. and during the Middle Kingdom (2000-1750 B.C.). But in the 18th century B.C., Egypt was overrun by invaders called the Hyksos, who came from the east. They were a nomadic people and their culture was far less advanced than the Egyptian. Their rule was short; soon the Egyptian kings regained their land, and the New Kingdom was founded.

Egypt's Social Classes—Pharaoh to Slave

The Egyptian king was called the *pharaoh*. He had absolute powers. The land belonged to him and his word was law. He was also looked upon as god and his statues were put in temples. His deeds and victories were inscribed on temple walls. Next to the pharaoh came priests, officials, artists and craftsmen. Below these people were the farmers who lived beyond the cities and then came the slaves who were generally prisoners of war and owned by the king.

Occupations, Arts and Crafts in Ancient Egypt

Agriculture was the most important occupation of the people. The rivers fertilized the land every year, and the people worked together to build canals to make it possible to grow crops all the year round. They appear to have used oxen to draw the plough as early as 3000 B.C.

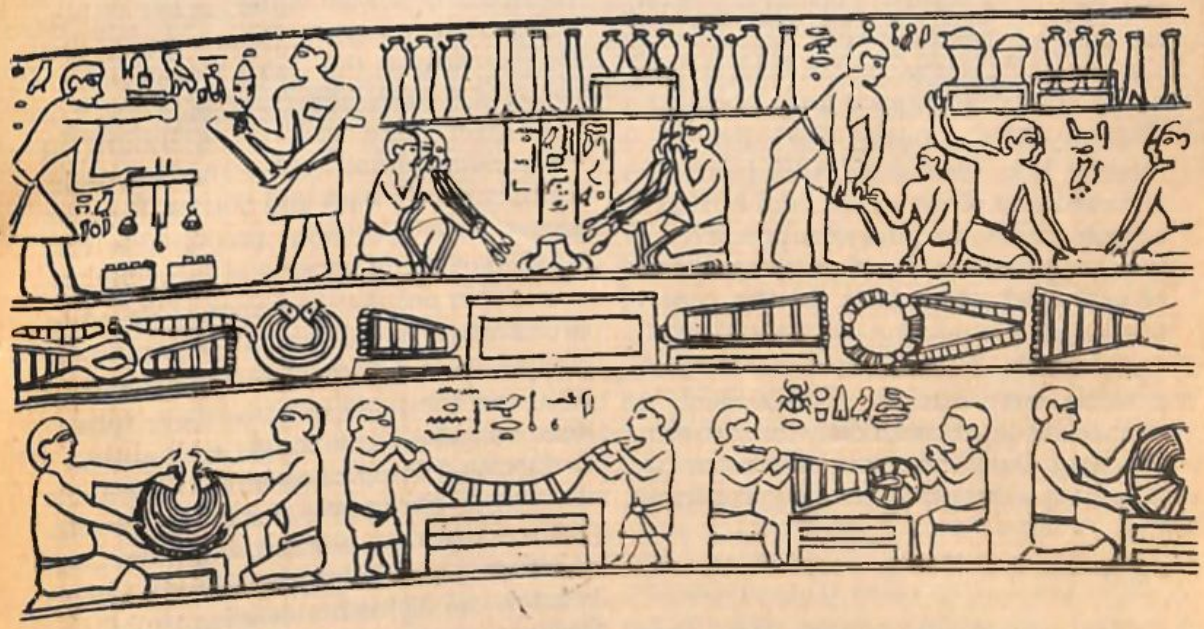
Like the people of other early civilizations, the Egyptians domesticated animals. Goats, dogs, asses, pigs and geese were common. They seem to have had camels also. The horse was brought to Egypt by the Hyksos and was used to draw war chariots.

Flax was grown in plenty in Egypt. While the Mesopotamians wore woollen clothes, the Egyptians had linen garments, much more suitable to the climatic conditions. Egyptians made beautiful stone vases which they exported. Like the Mesopotamians, they also developed the art of making glass and produced glassware of graceful shapes. Carpenters made beautiful furniture inlaid with ivory and precious stones,

2.10 Panel showing Egyptian agriculture

which was well preserved in the royal tombs.

The lavish life of the Egyptians required such luxury products as incense, oil, silver, timber for building and other things which had to be brought from foreign countries. Transport of goods overland was done on pack asses. The Nile was used as a waterway. The Egyptians also had sea-going ships which were used both in war and for peaceful purposes.



2.11 Panel showing Egyptian metal workers at work

Religion

The Egyptians believed that there was a power behind every phenomenon of nature, but the sun was their most important god, worshipped under different names as the creator of all things Other Egyptian gods were the king of the other world, god of the floods, and the moon god. There were also local gods, sometimes represented by symbols, such as the hawk, crocodile, jackal and cow. These were probably clan totems in some distant past. Priests do not appear to have played an important part in Egyptian religion.

The Egyptians firmly believed in life after death. When a man is alive, they thought, he has a body and a soul. While other people believed that after death, the body perishes and the soul lives, the Egyptians believed that both the body and the soul live though in a different way. So they took great care in preserving the body of the dead. The body was embalmed in spices and then wrapped in strips of fine linen. Such a preserved body is called a mummy. The mummy was put in a wooden box, decorated with paintings, enclosed in a stone coffin, and buried in a tomb. Inside the tomb were preserved all the things that the dead person was fond of and used when alive. In the case of kings and queens, the coffins and tombs were costly while those of ordinary persons were simple. Things such as clothes, foods, drinks, costly furniture and jewellery were kept in the tombs. The pyramids were the tombs of great kings.

Egyptian Architecture and Sculpture

The pyramids were the most remarkable Egyptian buildings in the early period. Still remaining as achievements of those years are 30 large pyramids and a number of small ones. The most imposing of all is the Great Pyramid at Gizeh near Cairo. It was built about 2650 B.C. by the Pharaoh Cheops (Khufu) of the Old Kingdom. According to Herodotus, the great ancient Greek historian, 300,000 men worked for twenty years to complete this structure which is made of huge blocks of stone. These blocks were cut into shape and rolled up a slope and fitted together skilfully and carefully. This required an amazing degree of engineering skill. The Great Pyramid undoubtedly deserves its place among the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Since the pyramids were the tombs of *pharaohs*, they contained the *mummies* of these monarchs and also all kinds of precious things they used. Many of the pyramids were robbed through the centuries, but the tomb of king Tutankhamen was found intact in the 1920's. The treasures of this tomb can now be seen in the Cairo Museum. The pyramid walls contain a large number of paintings. They give us a wealth of information about the lives of the people, for they depict wars and battles, hunting scenes and sacrificial processions and numerous other aspects of everyday life.

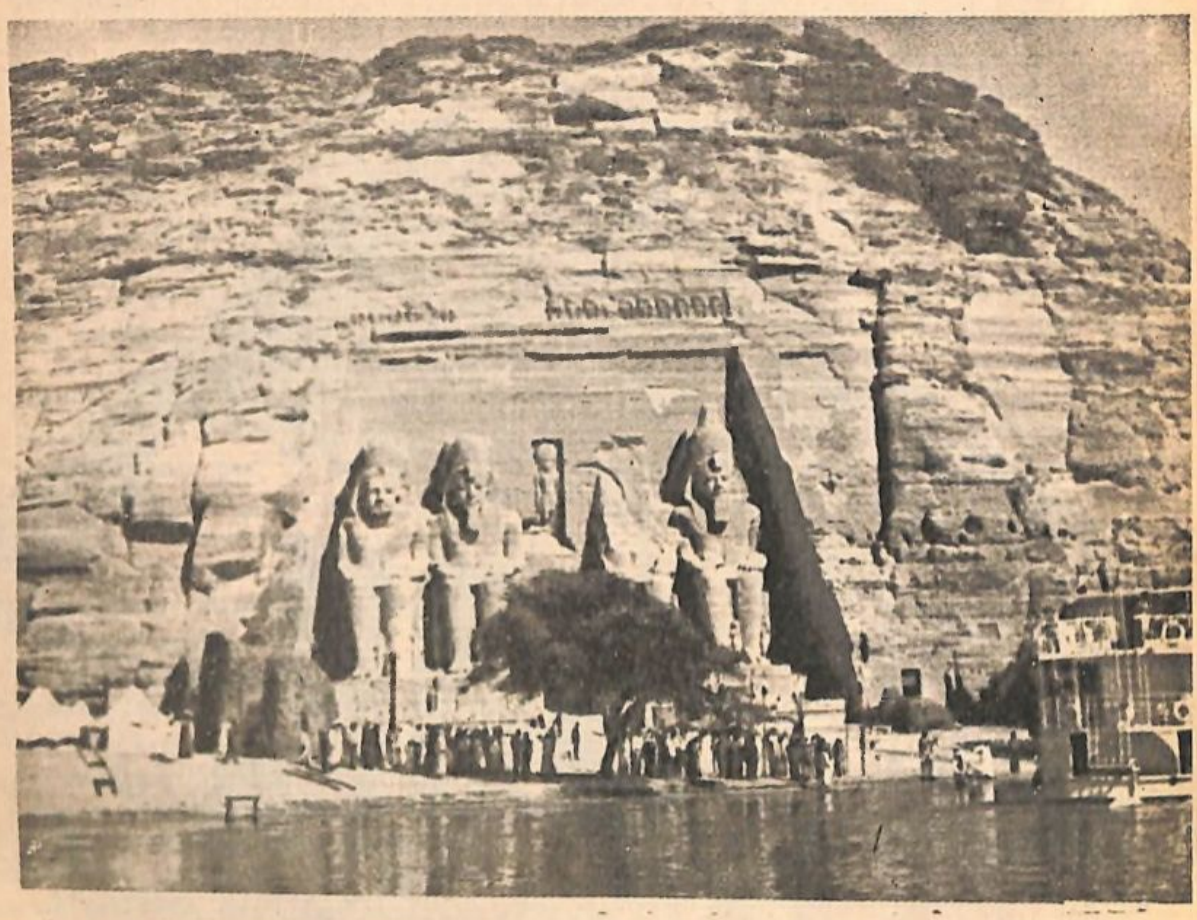
Another peculiar specimen of Egyptian architecture is the sphinx. The sphinx is a mythological animal with the body of a lion and the head of man. Each sphinx was carved out of a single solid stone.

Egyptian temples are also remarkable buildings. The temple at Karnak, lavishly adorned with statues and sculptures, has a hall of 130 impressive columns and an avenue of sphinxes leading from the temple to the river. Another famous temple is the great temple of Abu Simbel, cut out of sandstone of cliffs. There was a

2.12 The Pyramid at Gizeh

series of halls in the interior of the temple which was dug into solid rock for about 60 metres. The temple was dedicated to the sun god. A most remarkable feature of the temple was that the rays of the rising sun shone into the temple, and so it has been called the 'temple of the rising sun'.

Both Karnak and Abu Simbel stood on the banks of the Nile. In the 1950's, a high dam began to be built at Aswan. It became clear that with the completion of the dam, Abu Simbel would be submerged under the water of the Nile. Unesco, therefore, launched a scheme for saving these monuments by international effort. A number of archaeological teams from many countries of the world, including India, were engaged in 'lifting' the monuments in order to preserve them. In India, you may recall, the monuments at Nagarjunakonda were similarly saved when the Nagarjunasagar was built.



2.13 The Great Temple of Abu Simbel

Hieroglyphic Script

The Egyptians perhaps learned the idea of writing from the Sumerians before 3000 B.C., but their writing is not a copy of cuneiform. The Egyptian script is known as *Hieroglyphic*, which means 'sacred writing'. It consisted of 24 signs, each of which stood for a single consonant. Vowels were not written. Later, the Egyptians started using symbols for ideas and the total number of signs rose to about 500. The importance of writing was soon recognized and, as in Sumer, writing became a specialized art. The writers, who constituted an important section of society, wrote with reed pens on the leaves of a plant called *papyrus* from which we get the word 'paper'.

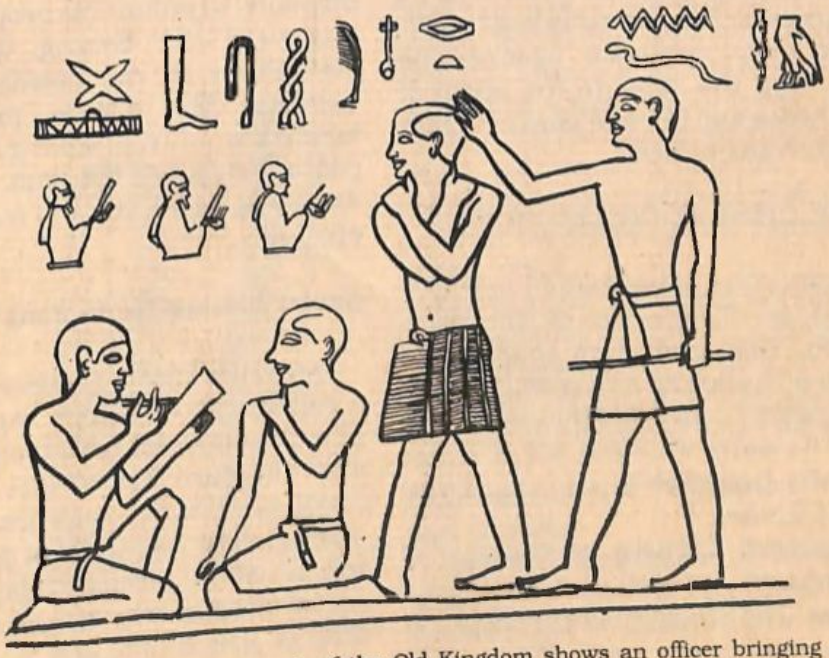
How the hieroglyphic script was deciphered is a fascinating story as it was in the case of the cuneiform. Napoleon, the famous French conqueror, invaded Egypt in 1798. He had with him a number of scholars. They discovered a stone—now the famous Rosetta Stone—near the

mouth of the Nile. It had on it an inscription in three languages– hieroglyphic, demotic, another popular script of the ancient Egyptians, and Greek. After much patient labour, Champollion (1790-1832), the great French decipherer, succeeded in deciphering the entire Egyptian alphabet. This discovery, like that of the Behustun inscription in the case of the Sumerian script,opened new doors for understanding the Egyptian civilization.

Mathematics and Science in Ancient Egypt

The Egyptians made significant advances in many fields of knowledge. They developed a decimal system of numeration. Numbers from 1 to 9 were represented by one sign repeated to give a desired number. For 10 and its multiples, there were different signs. There were separate symbols for 1, 10, 100 and so on. To write 153, the symbol for 100 was written once, for 10 five times, and for one thrice. Additions and substractions were easy in this system. The Egyptians could also calculate the area of a triangle or a rectangle.

The crowning achievement of the Egyptians was the solar calendar. Almost all early people, like the Sumerians, formulated their calendars on the basis of lunar months. But this is not helpful for an agricultural people who require an accurate knowledge of seasons and rains and floods for their agricultural operations. After years of observation, the Egyptians found out that the average length of the period between two floods was 365 days. They also observed that a very bright star, Sirius, was the last to appear on the horizon when the flood



2.14 The panel taken from a tomb of the Old Kingdom shows an officer bringing a slave to the scribes

reached Cairo, and that this happened after every 365 days.

These two independent observations led the Egyptians to conclude that the year had 365 days. The year was then divided into 12 months each of 30 days. The extra five days were set apart for the celebration of religious festivals. However, the solar year actually consists of about 365 1/4 days. Therefore over a period of time, a calendar based on a year of 365 days was bound to prove wrong. Perhaps the Egyptians realized this, but, by then, custom had established the previous calendar so firmly that they did not change it. Still the Egyptian solar calendar was a great achievement.

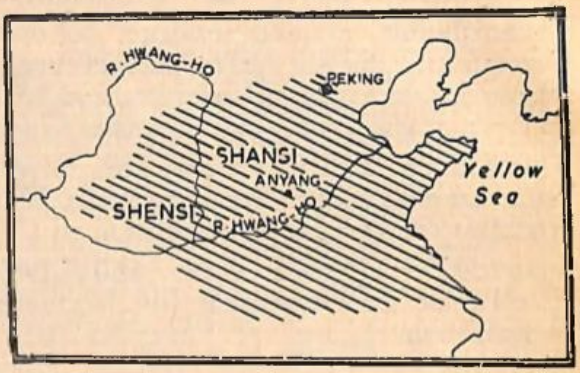
The Egyptians' practice of preserving the bodies of the dead by embalming was a stimulus to science. It added to the knowledge of the structure of the human body, and to the skill in surgery.

By about 1000 B.C. the great days of Egypt were over. The pharaohs had to fight for their very existence against the invaders from the areas to the south of Egypt in Africa and the new powers across the Mediterranean Sea.

THE CHINESE CIVILIZATION

The first centre of civilization in China developed in the region of the river Hwang-Ho. This river often changed its course after the floods. As a result, homes and fields were flooded and the canals dug to carry the water were put out of order. That is why this river is also called 'the Sorrow of China'.

The earliest Chinese civilization of which archaeologists tell us is the Shang civilization. The Shang rulers are believed to have been in power from 1765 to 1122 B.C. According to archaeological evidence,



The Shang Civilization

by the 14th century B.C. the Shang people had developed a high level of culture, comparable to the centres of the other early civilizations. The neighbours of the Shang people appear to have been much behind them in culture. One of the primary duties of the Shang king was, therefore, to protect his people from them. However, the Shang dynasty was overthrown by the neighbouring Chou dynasty. The Chous preserved the excellence of the Shang culture and continued to rule the land till about 250 B.C. about which you will read in the next chapter.

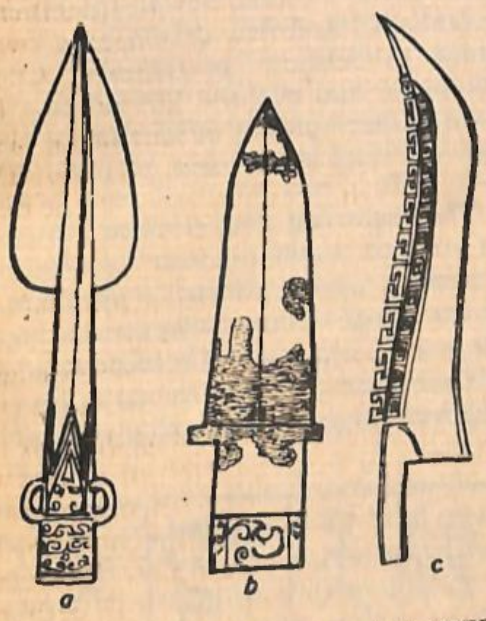
Social Classes in Ancient China

Below the king in Chinese society came a number of noblemen. Apparently the king distributed lands among the nobles, who in return helped him in wars and conquests. Some scholars regard this arrangement as a kind of *feudal system* which will be discussed later. The next social class of importance was perhaps that of merchants and craftsmen. The bulk of the population was composed of farmers, and at the lowest end stood the

slaves, who were, as in other cultures of the time, prisoners of war. The Shang kings spent considerable time in wars and conquests. They, therefore, needed a good army, and soldiers occupied a place of importance in society. The soldiers wore bronze helmets and a metal body armour. Bronze daggers, axes, bows and metal tipped arrows have been discovered.

Occupations, Arts and Crafts in Ancient China

As in the other three cultures, the prosperity of the Shang people depended on agriculture. Millet was the main cereal cultivated. Wheat was introduced later. The Shang people came to cultivate rice also on a large scale. The Chinese worked out an elaborate system of irrigation, which reduced the distress caused by floods.



2.15 Bronze weapons and implements a. spearhead b. Dagger-axe c. Knife

2.16 A bronze wine vessel with animal motifs

From very early days the Chinese wore linen clothing. There is evidence that the Shang people also used silk. Breeding of silkworms was begun, and silk production became an important Chinese industry.

The Chinese made very fine pottery which they learned to glaze. They also learned to make dishes of porcelain. We still call porcelain dishes *chinaware*, or simply *china*.

The specimens of metal work that have been found tell us that the Chinese metal worker was a master of his craft. Some of the bronze articles of the Shang period are superior to many produced later.

Chinese Ancestor Worship and Oracles

Ancestor worship was the most popular practice of the ancient Chinese. They believed that death transformed a mortal

into a spirit and that the spirit possessed great powers. The dead person was wrapped in matting for burial in a grave. Furniture, pottery, bronze vessels, and other objects were placed with the dead body. The tombs of the kings were spacious and the tomb chamber was of finely carved wood. This reminds us of the Egyptian burial customs.

The gods worshipped were, as in other civilizations, the forces of nature. But the Chinese also believed in a chief god, who was called 'The Ruler Above'. People wanted to know what would happen to them in the future; they wanted the gods to tell them what to do and how to act so that they could gain their end. So they approached a priest or a holy person who was supposed to be in close touch with the gods. Thus developed the practice of consulting *oracles.*

The questioner used to ask the oracle a number of questions. The oracle procured polished tortoise shells or bones of cattle and made small holes in them. When fire was applied to the hole, the bone cracked and the answers were inferred from the nature of the cracks. The oracles naturally gained great prestige in society.

Chinese Script

It is generally thought that the Chinese script was originally derived from the Sumerian. It started as a pictographic script, that is, a picture standing for a word, but it was independently developed as an ideographic script in which a sign represents an idea. It is remarkable that the Chinese script has changed very little since the earliest times. Writing became an art and the same techniques were followed every where. Writers wrote on silk or bamboo slips with a brush.

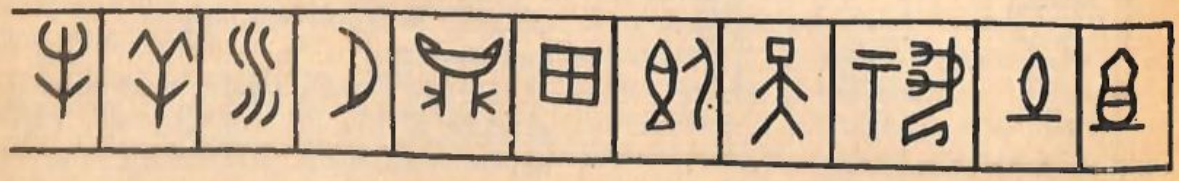
The Chinese Solar-Lunar Calendar

The Chinese calendar was a combination of solar and lunar calculations. The months were lunar and consisted of 29 or 30 days, but the length of the year was correctly calculated as $365^{1}/_{4}$ days. The Chinese scholars seem to have made one other unique advance in astronomy. It appears that they could correctly foretell lunar eclipses.

The achievements of the Shang civilization were continued and spread to other parts of China. New kingdoms were established and new developments took place in religion, government, social, economic and cultural life, science and many other spheres of life. About these you will read in the next chapter.

The beginning of all *civilized* living can be traced back to the civilizations described above. Hence they mark a distinct stage in the development of man's life and the beginning of recorded history.

Each civilization developed in its own way with its own unique character. All of



2.17 Some signs of the Chinese script of the Shang Civilization

them, however, had certain common characteristics. The rise of cities and states is a characteristic feature of civilization and it is found in all the four cultures. The term 'state' implies a defined area with a government which makes and enforces laws over all the people living within the borders of that state.

States came into existence only after human societies had reached a certain stage of development. To begin with, these states were small; in course of time, they became larger. A state was usually ruled by a king, who had a number of officials to assist him. States also had their armies of professional soldiers, which helped the kings in enforcing their will over the people. The knowledge of metals brought into use new and better weapons—for defence against foreign invaders, for waging wars on neighbouring states and for enforcing laws within the state.

In prehistoric times, when man had barely enough food to live on, there were no differences between man and man. Everyone performed more or less the same type of work and lived in more or less the same way. With the rise of civilizations, social classes arose. Different groups of people performed different types of work and lived differently. There were upper classes and lower classes. The rights of the people differed according to the class to which they belonged. The laws made by the state gave different rights to different people.

It has been mentioned earlier that excavations of the Neolithic sites have not revealed the prevalence of a higher status for some members of the community. With the rise of civilizations, however, inequalities emerged. The common people—the peasants and artisans—enjoyed a very low economic status. Even the law codes reflected these inequalities. Many people were made slaves. All these people who produced all the things, whether it was food or cloth or other manufactures, did not enjoy all the fruits of their labour. A large part of what they produced was taken over by the rulers, the priests and the officials.

The armies that the rulers had were used not only to provide security to the people from invasions and to wage wars against others but also to keep the people under subjugation. The inequalities in society can be seen from the remains of the buildings and monuments of these civilizations. There were huge palatial buildings for the rulers, merchants and big officials; the common people lived in slum-like houses. These differences in the houses for the rulers and other upper classes and for the common people can be seen in all these civilizations.

The rise of classes was accompanied by a growing division of labour. People freed from producing food, specialized in various arts and crafts. Thus many new skills developed that required a high degree of training. Metallurgy required techniques like smelting and casting. With the invention of the potter's wheel, pottery became a large-scale industry. Similarly, many advances were made in textile manufacture and other industries. Diversification and specialization of work was true of all the civilizations.

The rise of civilizations marks the beginning of systematic knowledge about the world. Each civilization made its contribution to mathematics, astronomy and other sciences. The script which each civilization developed constituted a revolutionary advance in human knowledge. Now ideas could be put down

and transmitted to a far larger number of people than was possible earlier. The record that these scripts have given us is invaluable for understanding these early civilizations. These civilizations also developed religious ideas in a more systematic way.

Trade within a state and with others is another common characteristic of the four civilizations. Trade, in fact was a necessary requirement for their growth because no civliization could produce all that it needed. For this, the means of transport—by water and land were improved. With the invention of the wheel and its application to transport, the primitive sledge was converted into a cart and chariot. However, in the absence of roads, pack animals were the most important means of transport on land.

Equally important in these civilizations was the movement of ideas. Knowledge of techniques developed at one place often spread to other areas. It is difficult to know the exact origin of ideas because an idea borrowed from one civilization was adapted and developed to suit local needs. All contributed to the foundations on which other civilizations developed later in other parts of the world.

EXERCISE

Things to know

1. To what extent were the conditions of nature responsible for the development of civilization in river valleys ?
2. In what ways were the Bronze Age civilizations similar ?
3. Cite evidences to show that Bronze Age civilizations were well advanced over the Neolithic cultures.
4. With which of the four civilizations, and in what way, do you associate each of the following terms ?
   Oracle, silk, Behistun Inscription, Great Bath, mummies, ziggurat, Babylon, seals sexagesimal system, sphinx, Hammurabi.
5. Why was it natural for the people to concern themselves with calendars? In what respects did the calendars of the early civilizations differ ?
6. Describe the scripts used by the Mesopotamians, Egyptians and Chinese.
7. Why are we less sure about many details of the Harappan culture than about the civilizations of the Nile or Tigris-Euphrates ?
8. Why do we feel sure there was trade among the people of the early civilizations ?

Things to do

1. Collect or sketch pictures to show the most significant achievements of each of the four early civilizations for a large wall chart in four parts.
2. Write a paper entitled 'Religious Beliefs in the Early Civilizations'. Point out similarities and differences and explain what religious practices were common in the four civilizations, and why.

Things to think about and discuss

1. Do you think it was worth while to save Abu Simbel? Why, or why not ?
2. What reasons can you think of that might explain why the ability to read hieroglyphic and cuneiform writing was 'lost to the world' for so long ?
3. Discuss reasons why the societies of the early civilizations were divided into classes.
4. Make a comparative study of the life in the Stone Age and the Bronze Age civilizations.

CHAPTER 3

Early Iron Age Civilizations

(1200 B.C.—A.D. 600)

YOU have probably already noted that the first civilizations about which you have just read were all in the eastern part of the world. When these civilizations were flourishing, most of the people in the western world were far less advanced. Around the beginning of the first millennium B.C., civilization expanded to other areas in the East. At the same time, in the lands around the Mediterranean Sea also civilizations began to develop rapidly.

Discovery of Iron

The civilizations that you have read about in Chapter 2 made use of copper and its alloy, bronze, for making tools and implements. Hence these civilizations are called Bronze Age civilizations. They emerged in areas where clearing of jungles on a large scale for purposes of cultivation was not required and the soil could be easily worked. The next major advance in the history of mankind occurred with the discovery and use of iron. Iron is harder than copper and bronze. It is also cheap and is available in plenty. Copper is comparatively a scarce metal found only in a few areas and is costly. The discovery of iron made it possible to make a variety of agricultural tools such as ploughshares, sickles, shovels and spades on a large scale. Axes made of iron also made it possible to fell trees and clear jungles on a large scale, thereby making more land available for cultivation. The effect of iron on other crafts also is of great importance as it helped in making a variety of tools and implements that could be used for specialized jobs. Archaeologists have found a variety of iron objects such as hammers, anvils, tongs, nails, chisels, saws and gouges, which indicate the wide variety of specialized jobs for which these objects could be used. The importance of iron weapons in warfare is also immense.

The use of iron was known to certain communities as early as about 2000 B.C. but it was only around 1400 B.C. that the secrets of iron forging were learned. The credit for employing techniques of iron-

making goes to the Hittites who lived in Asia Minor (Turkey). To them also goes the credit for the domestication of the horse, which was generally not known to the Bronze Age civilizations.

The Iron Age began in about 1200 B.C. when iron implements began to be used in Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Greece. By about 500 B.C. it had spread to a large part of Europe.

In India, Iron Age began in about 1000 B.C. It is after this period that the plains of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab were settled on. It is believed that iron implements were used in clearing the thick jungles in the Gangetic plains and iron ploughshare was used for tilling the hard soil. The material remains of the early Iron Age in India do not indicate a high level of culture. However in the 6th century B.C. we find the establishment of many urban centres. Some of these later grew into powerful empires.

The discovery and use of iron facilitated the growth of civilization and its spread to many new areas of the world.

Early Iron Age Civilizations

The civilizations described in this chapter marked the beginning of the Iron Age; hence they are called the Iron Age civilizations. In this chapter you will learn first about the developments that took place in India and in China after the decline of the Harappan culture and the Shang civilization respectively. You will also read about the Iranian civilization which, during the first millennium B.C. developed into a large empire and which after its decline was again revived in the third century of the Christian era. The two ancient European civilizations that began to develop about 3000 years ago in Greece and Rome are also described here. These two civilizations had a deep impact on the pattern of future European culture.

Of course, the civilizations described in the following pages were influenced by other peoples and cultures but space permits a mention of only a few of them. For example, the civilization of the Hittites was a link between the West and the civilization of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The Phoenicians, centered in the present Lebanon, also carried their ideas West along with their trade. Their greatest contribution to the world was the development and spread of a script which was completely phonetic—an alphabet based on sounds rather than objects. The Phoenician alphabet, based on the older Egyptian and Mesopotamian scripts, consisted of 22 letters. It influenced the development of the Greek alphabet and of many other systems of writing.

The description of the civilizations selected for this chapter will enable you to understand man's continuing progress. Each of the civilizations, as you will see, was different from the others. Most of them advanced beyond the achievement of the first civilizations. Each contributed to the world's heritage—in art, literature, philosophy, science and government.

Probably, the greatest of all the achievements of the peoples discussed in this chapter was in the cultural field. The foundations of national cultures were laid. The scripts and languages they developed formed the basis of all modern languages. Literature became important for the first time in man's history, and the first great poems, histories, grammars, dramas and philosophies were written. Writing was used for self-expression and for communication of ideas—not merely for keeping state records. Philosophy and science became systematized as subjects

of study. In art and architecture new techniques led to beautiful creations. Most of the great religions of the world also developed in these civilizations. Because of their cultural achievements, these civilizations are directly linked with the entire course of human history.

You have seen how with the emergence of civilization, states had emerged. Each state had its own armies which were used to keep their subjects under control and to wage wars against others and conquer new areas. Some of the states mentioned in Chapter 2 had grown into empires. In the Iron Age, many states became big empires, much bigger than any in the earlier period. They maintained huge armies which were used to conquer more and more areas. Wars between states became a frequent occurrence. Different kinds of political systems emerged; such as republics, oligarchies and monarchies. However, whatever the form of political system, the state served the interests of the rulers and ruling classes which had arisen with the emergence of civilization.

You have also seen that social inequalities had arisen with the rise of civilization. The social systems that prevailed in the civilizations described in this chapter were marked by sharp inequalities. The actual producers of wealth in society became the lowest group or class in society. A large portion of what they produced was taken by the rulers and ruling classes. This was a common feature of the social systems in all these civilizations. In fact, this is a common feature of all societies in which inequalities exist. However, the form of these inequalities varied from region to region. The form of exploitation, that is, the way the actual producers were deprived of a large portion of what they produced, also varied. In some civilizations, much of the productive work was carried on by slaves who were either prisoners taken during wars or people who failed to pay their debts. This was generally the case in the Greek and Roman civilizations. In India, the society was divided into castes. The rise of the cities, the impressive monuments and other works of art, the prosperity of the ruling classes, huge armies that the states maintained– all these were based on the exploitation of the actual producers who occupied a very low position in society. While the kings, the oligarchs and the upper classes lived in palatial houses in the midst of luxury, there was hardly any noticeable improvement in the living conditions of the mass of the population. In spite of all the improvements that took place in technology, most of the people continued to live in the same types of houses in which the people in Neolithic times lived. This is evident from the excavations of sites of these civilizations.

The most important change that the discovery and use of iron brought about was the spread of civilization. This became possible because many new areas of the world could now be brought under cultivation. The spread of civilization was accompanied by the rise of many more towns and cities. The rulers and the people belonging to upper classes lived in these towns and cities. These places were also centres of many crafts which grew with civilization. The spread of civilization also led to trade between different parts of the world and thus goods made in one place began to be exchanged for goods made in other place. Means of transport improved, especially shipping. The expansion of trade led to another development. Earlier, trade was carried on through the

exchange of goods or barter, as it is called. Now in many civilizations, money was introduced. This made the sale and purchase of goods much easier than before. The increasing use of money also showed that goods were now being produced not only for use by the local community but also for a bigger market.

While studying these civilizations it is important to remember that this period in human history saw a tremendous wave of migrations of peoples. Groups of people from different areas of the world came to new areas, settled down there and were assimilated into the pre-existing populations of those areas. Thus the composition of the population of almost every area was changed as a result of intermixing over a period of centuries. This also had a tremendous impact on the growth of civilization. Each group of people settling down in a new area brought with it its own traditions and knowledge and deeply influenced the culture of the country in which they settled down. The relations between different civilizations also grew and the mutual influence that these civilizations exercised on one another is a major aspect of the history of mankind. This happened through trade which expanded as a result of improvements in road and water transport and the growing needs of the economies of different civilizations. Wars also played an important part in the transmission of cultural achievements. The boundaries of states in those days were not fixed and territories changed hands frequently. The conquerors brought with them the knowledge and traditions of their civilizations to new areas. Thus most civilizations in this period developed as a result of intermingling of various peoples and traditions.

ANCIENT INDIAN CIVILIZATION

The Coming of the Aryans

In about 2000 B.C., migration of people who perhaps originally inhabited the Caspian Sea region, began to different parts of Europe and Asia. These people are called Indo-European speaking people as they spoke languages belonging to the Indo-European family of languages. They are also known as Aryans. A branch of these people, called Indo-Aryans, came to India around 1500 B.C. Their occupations were cattle-raising and agriculture and they had no experience with urban culture.

The Aryans lived in tribes and spoke Sanskrit which is a language of the Indo-European group. They worshipped the forces of nature—the god of rain and thunder (Indra), of wind (Varuna) and sun (Surya). These gods gave rain—so the people believed—ripened their crops, and helped to defeat enemies. Hymns in praise of these gods are found in the *Rigveda*.

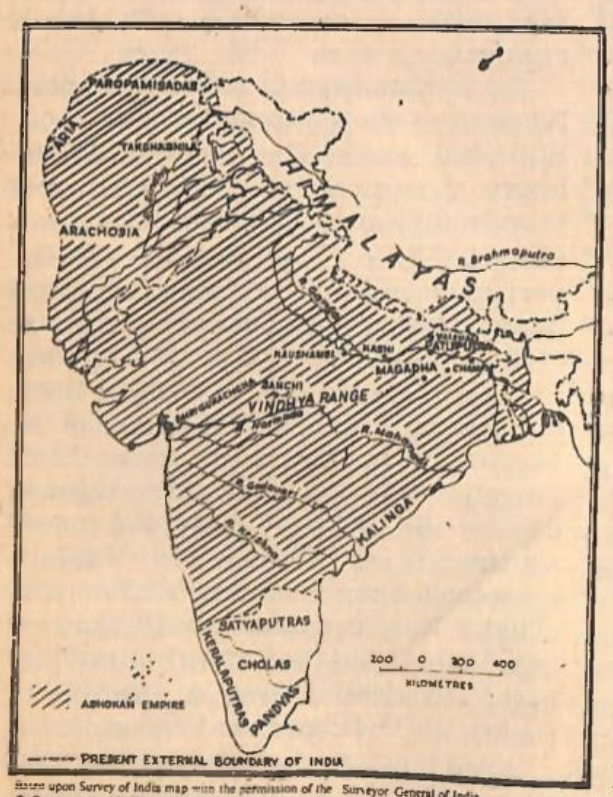
Punjab was the first permanent home of the Aryans in India. The hymns of the *Rigveda* were composed here. From Punjab they moved eastward and spread all over the Gangetic valley and moved southward as far as the Vindhya mountains. Later, they went to other parts of India. They inter-married with the local inhabitants, and the Indian culture that began to develop was a mixture of elements of Vedic and pre-Vedic cultures.

When the Aryans settled in India, they were divided into a number of small tribes which fought with one another and with the earlier inhabitants. In course of time small states were formed which were ruled by kings or aristocracies. By the 6th century B.C., larger states, both kingdoms

and republics, developed. These were the sixteen Mahajanapadas. At this time the region of southern Bihar became very important and soon Magadha rose to a position of pre-eminence to build an empire. The Iranians invaded India during this period and there ensued close cultural and political contacts between the two areas.

The Period of Empires

A struggle for power began with the kings Bimbisara and Ajatasatru of the kingdom of Magadha. In the 4th century B.C., the dynasty of the Nandas came to power. They had their capital at Pataliputra, the modern Patna. In the last quarter of the 4th century B.C., the Mauryan dynasty replaced the Nandas. This came about partly as a result of Alexander's invasion and the decline of Iranian strength in India. Chandragupta Maurya took advantage of the unsettled conditions and, with the help of his adviser, Kautilya, built the first great empire in India. Under Chandragupta Maurya and his two great successors, Bindusara and Asoka, almost the whole of India, with the exception of the farthest south, was unified into one empire. The former Greek territories of Aria, Archosia and the Paropamisadae in the north-west of India became part of the Mauryan empire when an invasion led by Seleucus failed.



Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India.
© Government of India copyright, 1966.
The territorial waters of India extend into the seas to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Asoka's Empire

Many important developments took place in the social, economic and cultural life of the Indian people in this period—322 to 184 B.C. Particularly important was the spread of Buddhism, which had arisen earlier.

The decline of the Mauryan empire after the rule of Asoka was followed by a long period of new invasions and the formation of small states. Of the foreign invasions, the first was that of the Greeks who were the rulers of Bactria. The Greeks were able to conquer Punjab and parts of Sind. The Greek contact had a lasting influence on the culture of India. One of its consequences was the development of the Gandhara style of art. The greatest Greek ruler in India was Menander (Milinda) in the 2nd century B.C., who became a Buddhist. The famous Buddhist work *Milindapanha*, consists of a dialogue between Menander and a Buddhist philosopher.

The Greek invasion was followed by that

of the Sakas. The Sakas, displaced the Greeks in Bactria and spread their power in western India. They also occupied Malwa. One of the Saka kings was Rudradaman who, as the name suggests, was a devotee of Siva. He was responsible for important irrigation works in Saurashtra. The Sakas, like other invaders, became a part of Indian life.

Another group of invaders from Central Asia was that of the Kushans early in the 1st century A.D. The greatest of the Kushan rulers was Kanishka who, according to some historians, started the Saka era in A.D. 78. Kanishka ruled his vast empire in India and Central Asia from Purushpur (modern Peshawar) for 40 years. Kanishka's empire brought to India the cultural traditions of Iran, Greece and Rome. It also provided a stimulus to trade between India and other parts of the world. Kanishka patronized the Mahayana form of Buddhism. It spread to Central Asia during this period and from there to China, Korea and Japan. The Kushan empire declined in the 3rd century.

In the third century B.C., there were three kingdoms in southern India. The Pandyas ruled over the southern-most and south-eastern parts of India from their capital at Madurai. The Cholas ruled over the Coromandel coast. The Cheras ruled over much of the present Kerala. The most important kingdom in the Deccan and Central India after the Mauryas was that of the Satavahanas. Locate these kingdoms in the map above. The Satavahana kingdom reached its zenith under Gautamiputra Satakarni (A.D. 106– A.D. 130) and declined in the third century. It fell when the Vakatakas emerged. However, the cultural traditions of the Satavahanas lived on through the Rashtrakutas, the Chalukyas and the Pallavas. The last rose to power in the third century with their capital at Kanchi. In Orissa, a strong kingdom had arisen in the first century B.C. under the rule of Kharavela.

In these kingdoms, there was a further development of the cultural unity of India. At the time these kingdoms flourished, there was nothing exclusively Aryan or Dravidian in their mores or cultural traits. Kanchi, for example, was an important seat of Sanskrit learning and of Buddhism and Jainism. The building and painting of the cave temples at Ajanta and Ellora began with the Satavahanas. These kingdoms also developed widespread trading contacts with the Roman empire, South-East Asia, West Asia and China, and foreign trade came to play an important part in the economic life of the people. The excavations at Arikamedu, the Roman trading post near Madras, have thrown much light on the Indo-Roman trade relations in ancient times. Trade with South-East Asian countries also led to many Indian settlements there, some of which played an important role in the political and cultural development of those countries.

When these developments were taking place in the south, north India was also undergoing important changes. Early in the 4th century Chandragupta I established the Gupta dynasty in Magadha. His son, Samudragupta, conquered almost the whole of northern India. He performed the *ashvamedha* sacrifice to assert his supremacy and carried his military expeditions into the south. His successor, Chandragupta II made more conquests, after which the Gupta empire declined. Although the Gupta empire was never as extensive as the Mauryan empire, ancient Indian culture reached its peak under the

Guptas. The Gupta empire, declined as a result of the Hun invasions in the 5th century. By the 6th century, it had fallen apart completely.

After the decline of the Gupta empire, India was again divided into a number of states, each struggling for supremacy. For a time, a large part of north India was united by Harsha, ruling from Thanesar, near Delhi, but he could not match the power of the Chalukyas further south. After the death of Harsha, many small Rajput states rose in the north. Although the period after the Guptas was one of many relatively weak states cultural progress continued.

Administration and Government in Ancient India

In the Vedic period, kingship was the most common form of government. The king was not an absolute ruler as the states were still tribal in character. He did not enjoy many privileges.

When the states became bigger, the powers of the king also increased, but did not become absolute. The king was regarded as the servant of the dharma which was a body of laws based on custom as well as tradition, supposedly of divine origin.

The political practices in India underwent many changes when the empires were formed. Most of the republics which were ruled by aristocracies were destroyed. The powers and privileges of the king increased and he was now the head of the government and directed the entire administrative machine. He himself appointed the highest officials. No checks were recognized to the king's authority. Meanwhile, the ideal of the *chakravartin* or universal emperor had also developed. It was not merely an ideal of conquest but also of rule according to dharma.

Under the Mauryas, almost all of India was directly ruled by one king. The provinces had governors who were usually princes of the royal family; a hierarchy of officials assisted the governor. The aim of administration was not merely efficient rule to maintain the empire but also social welfare. The ideal of kingship, as laid down in the *Arthashastra*, is that 'in the happiness of his subjects lies the happiness of the king and in their welfare, his welfare'. The Kushans, whose kingdom was fairly extensive, developed a system under which there were more or less independent divisions, making the kingdom a loose federation. The Kushan king bore the title 'Great King of Kings'. In the Satavahana kingdom centralizing elements of Mauryan administration were continued as these territories had been parts of the Mauryan empire. The Gupta administration was well organized through the provinces.

Though frequent changes in dynasties affected the administrative system at the top, the 'administration' of the village remained more or less the same. The village grew into autonomous units, with a headman and elders who had authority over law and order, public works, local disputes, and the collection of revenue for the state.

Social and Economic Conditions

The Aryans were a cattle-raising people when they came to India. Cattle was the primary form of wealth and even the value of a human being was measured in terms of it. Gradually, however, agriculture became an important occupation. In fact,

the Aryan arrival in the Gangetic valley was accompanied by the extension of agriculture in this area. Vast jungles were cleared. The use of iron made the land fit for cultivation.

Other occupations also developed along with agriculture. The carpenter had an esteemed place in the village life and economy. Metal-workers also became important. There were also potters, tanners, weavers and many other craftsmen. The growth of these occupations introduced a certain degree of specialization and led to the beginning of trade.

Around 600 B.C. many new towns developed around the centres of trade and industry. Some of these were Rajagriha, Champa, Kasi, Kausambi, Taxila, Bhrigukachcha and Vaisali. Trade grew with the West and with Central Asia as a result of the Iranian, Greek and other invasions. India's trade and cultural contacts with South-East Asia also increased. Many industries, such as textile, ivory and ironwork developed. Iron was not used in India until after the coming of the Aryans. Artisans producing specialized goods were organized into guilds called *shrenis*. These guilds, in course of time, became sub-castes. Later, trade relations between the Romans and the southern kingdoms grew.

After the decline of the Guptas and the disintegration of the western Roman empire, trade with Rome declined but increased with South-East Asian countries and with the east coast of Africa. In this period, however, there also grew the idea that travel to overseas lands led to pollution and should not be undertaken by those wishing to retain their caste purity. This idea must have caused some retardation in trade.

The most important feature of the Indian society since ancient times has been the caste system. It can be traced back to early Vedic times. When the Aryans came to India, they were divided into three main groups. These were the warriors, priests and all the rest of the people. It was possible then for members of the same family to follow different occupations. However, when the conquest of the indigenous inhabitants began, rigid social divisions were brought in. The Aryans divided themselves into the kshatriyas (warriors), the brahmans (priests), and the vaisyas (cultivators). The non-Aryan inhabitants of India whom the Aryans called *dasas* became the sudras. The sudras also included the offspring of the Aryan-dasa mixed marriages.

Of these castes, the kshatriyas and the brahmans enjoyed more or less the same status, though the position of the brahmans rose as the importance of rituals performed by them grew. Many vaisyas became landowners and traders instead of cultivators, the group that later consisted of sudras.

This division of society into castes was sanctified by the Vedic literature according to which the brahmans were born from the head of the creator, the kshatriyas from his arms, the vaisyas from his thighs, and the sudras from his feet. A later body of literature called the *Grihasutras* made the system even more rigid. The body of literature known as the *Dharmasastras* furthered the process of rigidity and inequality. Different laws were prescribed for different castes. Punishments for the same crime varied according to the caste of the criminal.

The *Dharmasastras* gave full spiritual sanctity to the caste system and provided very harsh treatment for the sudras.

However, in a some respects the system was still flexible. Marriage between the male of a higher caste and the female of a lower caste was permissible. After some time, even this flexibility disappeared. There was also another group of people who were outcastes. Fa-Hien, the Chinese traveller who came to India during the rule of the Guptas, mentions them. They lived in separate parts of villages and even their appearance in the presence of others was regarded a cause of pollution. Their condition was much worse than that of the sudras. Within the framework of the four castes, there were sub-castes within each caste. The sub-castes were also hereditary and were based on occupation. The sub-castes became very important in Hindu society as they determined occupation and marriage rules.

As a result of the rise of Jainism and Buddhism and the settlement of foreigners in India following invasions, the rigidity of the caste system became somewhat less severe. However, when the Turkish invasions began in the 10th century, a rigid caste system was prevailing in India. Changes took place after that, but the system started breaking up only in modern times.

The caste system, however, provided stability to ancient Indian society. It also made easy the absorption of new elements– both indigenous and foreign– into ancient Indian society by giving them a place in the caste hierarchy. It may be noted that the kind of naked oppression that was common in many ancient societies, as is evident from the prevalence of slavery, did not exist in India in ancient times.

Ancient Indian society was *patriarchal*, the eldest male being the head of the family. A son lived with his parents, wife and children. Monogamy was the general norm though ploygamy was permitted and kings and rich people had many wives. We also find references to the existence of polyandry, or women with many husbands. In the south, there were some matriarchal societies.

A man's life was governed by the *ashrama* system. It was divided into four *ashramas*: (i) *brahmacharya*, the period of study of the sacred texts under a teacher; (ii) *grahasthya*, the period of domestic married life; (iii) *vanaprastha*, a life of growing detachment and preparatory abnegation; and (iv) *sanyasa*, living away from the family, in self-denial and other worldly pursuits. This did not apply to the lower castes as they were prohibited from studying the sacred texts. For others, it was the rule; how many people followed it is difficult to say.

Women did not have the right to inherit property though in many respects their life was free. A widow could remarry, normally her husband's brother. In some respects the status of a woman was later reduced to that of a sudra. A male child was valued more than a female child.

Religion and Philosophy

A number of Indian religions and schools of philosophy developed in the ancient period. The religious beliefs of the Harappan culture and of other pre-Aryan inhabitants of India and those of the Aryans led to the development of a variety of beliefs and religious practices which are grouped together as Hinduism.

The religious beliefs and practices of the Aryans are described in the Vedas. The various natural phenomena were personified and worshipped as gods but there were no temples. To propitiate these

gods, the Aryans performed *yajna* or sacrifices. An elaborate system of rituals which were observed while performing *yajna* developed.

In this period different schools of philosophy also emerged. Of these, Vedanta, Mimamsa, Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya and Vaiseshika became, in course of time, six distinct schools of Indian philosophy. The Vedanta school, which was based on a body of Vedic literature called the Upanishads greatly influenced the Indian thought for a long time. It dealt with many abstract ideas on the nature of the universe, the existence of soul, the relationship between individual and the universe, etc. Some of the schools of philosophy denied the existence of God.

Around 6th century B.C., new schools of thought arose. These were against the *yajna* and other ritualistic practices of the Vedic religion which by now lost its former simplicity. Of these schools, Jainism and Buddhism became very powerful and developed into major religions. They had a very important role in the development of Indian culture.

Jainism

Jainism, as we know it, was first preached by Vardhamana Mahavira who lived in the 6th century B.C. The Jains believe that Mahavira was the last of the Tirthankaras or great religious leaders who was preceded by 23 such leaders.

According to the Jains, every object, whether tree or stone or man or animal has a soul. That is why they lay great emphasis on *ahimsa* or non-injury and thus avoid hurting or killing any object.

Mahavira taught that Right Belief, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct are the means through which one can attain *moksha* or salvation.

The authority of the Vedas was denied by Mahavira who laid emphasis on good conduct and behaviour and did not prescribe rituals.

Later on, the Jains became divided into two sects: the Svetambaras (those dressed in white) and the Digambaras (sky-clad or naked).

Buddhism

In the sixth century B.C. another great religious leader, Gautama, the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism lived. His life has been widely famed in legend and literature and in painting and sculpture.

The Buddha taught four noble truths: (i) there is suffering in the world; (ii) this suffering has a cause; (iii) the cause is desire; (iv) it is possible to put an end to suffering if desire is removed. To attain *nirvana* or freedom from birth and rebirth and cessation of suffering, the Buddha said that one should know the "right way" for which he prescribed the eightfold path consisting of the Right View, Right Resolution, Right Words, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thinking and Right Concentration.

The Buddha also stressed the importance of the "middle path" and said that one should avoid the two extremes of strict asceticism and too much indulgence in worldly pleasures. Like Mahavira he also preached *ahimsa* but did not go as far as Mahavira.

The Buddha rejected the authority of the Vedas and social distinctions based on the caste system. Anybody could join the *sangha*.

The Buddhist *sangha* or the order of monks was a very disciplined and democratic organization. The monks and

nuns belonging to this order travelled all the year round preaching the Buddhist doctrines. Only during the rainy season they stayed in the *viharas* or monasteries.

The emperor Asoka helped to spread Buddhism widely in India and abroad. In course of time this religion spread to Sri Lanka, Burma, Western and Central Asia, Tibet and China and from there to Korea and Japan. Curiously Buddhism practically died out in the land of its birth. But Hinduism assimilated certain features of Buddhism.

Later on, the followers of the Buddha divided themselves into two sects, *Hinayana* (the Lesser Vehicle), and the *Mahayana* (the greater vehicle). The former school laid emphasis on the salvation of the individual by directly observing the eightfold path. The Mahayana school, on the other hand, started worshipping the Buddha as a god and stressed that salvation is open to all and not merely to monks and nuns. The worship of the images of the Buddha led to a great development of art in India and abroad.

Hinduism

By the time of the Guptas, the religious beliefs and practices had much changed from those of the Vedic time. The features which are characteristic of Hinduism, as we understand it now, had developed by this time. Its most important aspects were the idea of the trinity of gods, with Brahma, the Creator, Vishnu, the Preserver and Siva, the Destroyer. Most of the Hindus became devotees of Vishnu or of Siva. The idea of devotion or *bhakti* to God also originated around this time and the cult of Krishna, who was identified with Vishnu, started developing.

In certain areas the mother goddess whose worship had started from the Harappan times, continued to have devotees as well. This goddess was later worshipped as Shakti in different forms such as Uma, Bhavani, Annapurna, etc. in her benign mood or Kali, Karali, Chamundi, Chandi, etc. as the destroyer of the evil.

Hinduism teaches the existence of one Supreme Universal Spirit (*Ishwar* or *Parama Brahma*) but it allows the Hindu to worship Him in any form he likes. Thus Hinduism is henotheistic.

According to Hinduism the existence of each living thing is governed by its actions in previous lives. Good acts will bring fruit in some next existence and so will bad acts. This belief gave rise to the doctrines of *karma* and of re-birth. According to this belief, the soul within a body never dies. It is only the body that dies and is born again and again.

Hinduism considers *dharma* or virtue, *artha* or material well-being acquired in a righteous way and *kama* or gratification of the senses governed by a cultivated mind as the three main aims of human life. If one pursues these aims rightly one could attain *moksha* or salvation.

Another characteristic of Hinduism is *Varnashrama Dharma*. According to it one should observe the caste (varna) rules and abide by the functions prescribed for the different stages of life mentioned before. The four varnas and the four *ashramas* are however theoretical divisions of the society and idealised stages of life. The practical situations were much different.

Hinduism, however, has never been a uniform, stationary and unalterable religion. It has been able to adapt itself to the changing circumstances and conditions of life.

Hinduism with its varied doctrines,

principles, philosophies and rituals gave rise to many religious sects within itself. In course of time these sects developed their own ways of worshipping. But the members of each sect, while following their own system, maintained a respectful approach towards the views of others. Like Buddhism, some schools of Hinduism also spread outside India, particularly in the countries of South-East Asia.

The scriptures of Hinduism are many in number. The most important of these are the four Vedas—the *Rigveda*, the *Samaveda*, the *Yajurveda*, and the *Atharvaveda* —together with their *Brahmanas* and *Upanishads*.

The *Bhagawadgita* is also a very important scripture which synthesises three lines of thought on the way to achieve salvation through *Karma Marga*, by performing the prescribed sacrifices, rituals and duties of a householder, *Jnana Marga*, by acquiring knowledge and *Bhakti Marga*, by devotion to God. The influence of the epics— *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* and the *Dharmasastras* and *Puranas* on the life of the Hindus is also notable. With all its sects, Hinduism became the most widespread religion in India.

Cultural Achievements of Ancient Indians

Ancient Indian civilization made great achievements in languages and literature, in acrhitecture and art, and in the field of science. India also maintained close cultural contacts with other parts of the world.

Languages and Literature – Most of the languages spoken in India today had their origin in ancient times. They belong to two main groups of languages– Indo-European and Dravidian.

The earliest literature in Sanskrit consisted of the *Vedas*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*; these were learnt and transmitted orally. Sanskrit was the language of the early Aryans and it underwent a certain amount of change to become classical Sanskrit, more or less as we know it today. Simultaneously, there also grew up many languages which were known as Prakrits. They were much simpler in grammar and sound than Sanskrit. Pali, Magadhi, Sauraseni, were different forms of Prakrits spoken in different regions.

After the rise of Jainism and Buddhism, the position of Prakrit languages changed. The oral teachings of these religions were in Prakrit. Prakrit languages were used for administrative purposes under the Mauryas and in Asokan inscriptions. The scripts of the Asokan inscripitions were Brahmi and Kharosthi. For India, Brahmi script is the more important for it formed the basis of almost all Indian scripts. It was between the 4th century B.C. and the

3.1 Signs of the Brahmi script

4th century A.D. that the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the great Indian epics, were composed from ballads or *gathas* of even greater antiquity. There were many additions to these epics before they got their present forms. In the south, around the beginning of the Christian era, the Sangam literature in Tamil inaugurated a period of great poetry and epics.

Sanskrit became fully developed and standardized when the great grammarian Panini developed his grammar, and it became the language of learning. While the educated men, brahmans and kshatriyas, spoke Sanskrit, women and common people spoke Sauraseni and other Prakrit dialects. Most of the Buddhist literature was in Pali, a Prakrit language, though later even Buddhist works were written in Sanskrit. The Brahmi script underwent many regional variations and laid the foundation of regional scripts. Besides stones, copper plates were used for inscriptions. The *talapatra* (palm leaf) and *bhojpatra* (birch bark) were used as writing materials. Paper was introduced later when the Arabs and the Turks came to India.

Beginning with the 2nd century A.D., great dramas were written in India. The most famous of the dramatists were Ashvaghosha, Bhasa, and Kalidasa who was also the greatest of India's poets. The writing of fables began with the stories of the *Panchatantra* which were soon translated into many foreign languages.

Art and Architecture—For over a thousand years after the collapse of the Harappan culture there was no progress in the art and architecture of India. In fact, the achievements of the Harappan people were completely forgotten. There were no planned houses and cities and there was almost no sculpture. Even the pottery in Vedic period lacked artistic merits.

3.2 Bull capital of Asokan Pillar at Rampurva

With the Mauryas, late in the 4th century B.C., beginnings were made in the field of art. Asoka's buildings, *stupas*, and the later *chaityas* or assembly halls and *viharas* or monasteries presaged the imminent flowering of Buddhist architecture. The capitals of Asoka's pillars, are notable specimens of contemporary sculpture. Later on the *stupas*, built to cover the relics of the Buddha or other holy men, became beautiful works of art. Their railings and gateways were decorated with fine pieces of sculpture. These depicted scenes from the Buddha's life and the *jataka* stories.

3.2(a) Back of the northern gateway of the Sanchi stupa

3.3 Boddhisattva from Gandhara

Chaityas were built in this second phase of Buddhist art by boring and caving into rocks, and the paintings on the Ajanta walls began to make their first appearance.

After the Mauryas, the Gandhara and Mathura schools of art developed. The influence of Greek and Roman sculpture is very much evident in the Gandhara school, while Mathura school, evolved an indigenous form. The two schools portrayed Buddhist subjects and particularly the figure of the Buddha. The Satavahanas also encouraged the building of *chaityas* and *stupas*. One of the most impressive *chaityas* is at Karli. A great *stupa* was built at Amaravati; although the *stupa* is destroyed, much of the Amaravati sculpture has survived.

The period of the Guptas was the greatest period for ancient Indian art. Painting flourished in the period of the Guptas and the frescoes of Ajanta and Bagh were created. The Hindu temple architecture, with its *garbha griha* or shrine room in which the image of the god was placed, began with the Guptas. The temple was made of stone and consisted of only one room where the image was placed. Later, independent temples were built in the south and the north. These followed the early Gupta temples, but were much larger and had more sculptures. The temples also received grants of land and acquired an important place in the economic life of the country.

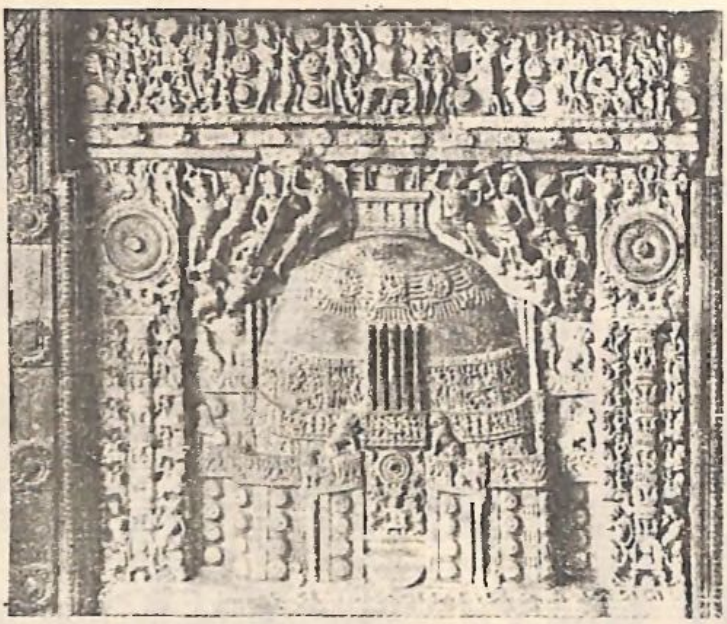
Development of Science—Many sastras or treatises were written on various branches of knowledge, such as medicine, astronomy, mathematics, grammar. The purpose of these *sastras* was to help in the proper performance of religious ceremonies but they laid the foundation of sciences.

In various schools of thought in ancient India, the universe has been classified into four or five elements—earth, air, fire, water and ether. These schools also propounded that the elements were made of atoms *(anu)* and the manner of combination of atoms within an element determined its characters. These theories were, however, not based on experiments, but on intuition and logic.

The need to calculate auspicious days and hours for sacrifice led to some knowledge of astronomy. Many important works came more than a thousand years later. These works contained knowledge of an exact method for determining the

3.4 The Buddha from Mathura

length of a day and for forecasting eclipses. Two outstanding astronomers of ancient India were Aryabhata and Varahamihira. The science of the zodiac was also developed, and trigonometry was applied to the study of astronomy.



3.5 Amaravati *stupa*

References to mathematics are contained in the Vedic literature. The need to construct Vedic altars laid the foundations of geometry. Gradually the knowledge of mathematics grew and some very important contributions were made—a decimal system of numerals, positional arithmetic and knowledge of zero (though it was not named as such). The body of works known as the *sulvasutras* or treatises on the construction of an altar for Vedic sacrifice contain information which presumes knowledge of the Pythagoras theorem and the doubling of squares. Mathematicians were able to calculate almost correctly, the value of the square root of 2. Centuries before the Guptas, Indian mathematics had been divided into two branches, *patiganita* (arithmetic) and *bijaganita* (algebra). Decimal notation and positional digits were used everywhere. The zero digit appeared and was called *bindu*.

The making of sacrifices added to the Indian's knowledge of anatomy. The *Atharvaveda* is rich in information about symptoms and diseases though not precisely related to each other, and about treatment of diseases with herbs, water, and magical *mantras*. There are references in Greek literature of that time to Indian remedies and medical formulae. Indian medicine appears to have greatly influenced Greek medicine.

Indian medicine reached a very high level during the Gupta times. The two great names in Indian medicine are *Susruta* and *Charaka*. The Ayurvedic medicine, still widely used in India, was fully developed in this period. The system laid great stress on hygiene and food. The knowledge of surgery was also fairly

3.6 Boadhisattva from Ajanta

advanced and many difficult operations were performed. The knowledge of chemistry also grew as a result of interest in alchemy. From the iron pillar at Delhi and references to the Indian swords valued abroad, it is evident that the knowledge of metallurgy had attained proficiency in ancient India.

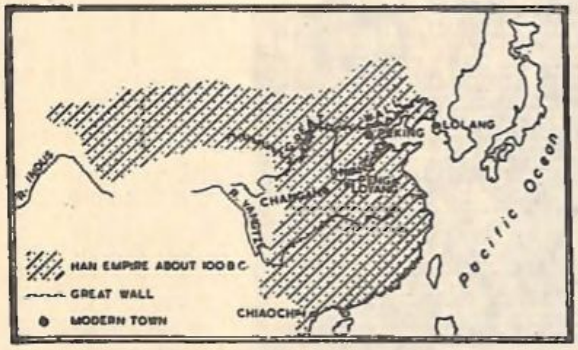
The culture of ancient India was burgeoning in all fields—government, economics, literature, art and science.

THE CIVILIZATION OF ANCIENT CHINA

Political Developments

After the Chous defeated the Shang rulers they conquered hundreds of small city-states. By the 8th century B.C. the city-states had been joined together to make only twelve. Though these states gave their allegiance to the central Chou government at Loyang, they were, for the most part, independent and were at war with one another. By the 7th century B.C. the central Chou state had become a puppet in the hands of the more powerful warring states. Continuous attacks by nomadic peoples from the surrounding areas added to the confusion in China for centuries.

By the 3rd century B.C. there were three



The Han Empire

major Chinese states—Chin, Chu and Chi. In 221 B.C. the state of Chin became dominant and the Chin ruler assumed the title of emperor over all three states. Then he extended his conquests over a major area to the south. With his rule began a period of ordered growth, progress and prosperity in Chinese civilization. He built roads in every direction to help army movements. To keep out invaders from the north, he began construction of a wall known as the Great Wall. He unified coinage, introduced regulations regarding weights and measures and standardized the Chinese script.

The Han dynasty followed the Chin dynasty in 202 B.C. and the Han emperors ruled China for almost 400 years. The Han rule brought great advances. Such great achievements were made in so many walks of life that many Chinese, for centuries afterwards, proudly called themselves 'Sons of Han'. Then followed a period of civil war and confusion. The Huns and Tartars invaded the empire and established settlements. It was almost after four centuries of anarchy that China again became united. This was accomplished in A.D. 589 by the Sui dynasty.

Social Organization and Administration

Society in ancient China was stratified with the state overlords or the emperor at the top. Below the ruler were five main classes—the literary or intellectual class, merchants, artisans, cultivators and slaves. The most respected in ancient China, as in India, were the intellectuals or literary men. But whereas the brahmans in India were born to their high position, in China the 'top' could, in theory, be reached by anyone through education. This was in theory rather than a fact; social equality never existed. Education was too expensive for most outside of the landed aristocracy, and the division of society into classes was fixed.

Soldiers occupied a low place in Chinese society at this time, and armies were often composed of people of 'doubtful' character. The emperor of China encouraged invading barbarians to join his army. Prisoners of war also sometimes became soldiers though they were usually enslaved and put to work on building roads or other constructions.

The government in ancient China was run by the lords of the states or the emperors. The emperors' power was absolute though they had an advisory council and ministers, chosen from the aristocracy.

The political philosophy and practices of the Han rulers were greatly influenced by the teachings of Confucius who lived and taught about 500 B.C. In fact, the name of Confucius is inseparable from any study of the Chinese civilization since his time. His teachings formed the basis of a religion called Confucianism. But he was more a philosopher-statesman than a religious leader. He advocated a system of rule based on high moral principles that

would promote peace and welfare. He studied the ills of society that existed during his time and believed that a strong central government was necessary to make and enforce laws to improve the condition of life for the man. He put many of his ideas into practice when he was a minister and adviser to rulers.

The Han rulers revived Confucianism and Confucius' ideas of training talented young men for public offices. Then, to qualify for appointment, the young men had to pass through an elaborate system of examination before they were chosen. Such 'scholar-officials' came to be known as *mandarins*.They became a new ruling class under the Hans and continued to be dominant in Chinese life right into the 20th century. In practice, many *mandarins* wandered far from the ideals of Confucius. However, the Chinese was the first civilization in history to have a system of selecting public officials on the basis of education and competitive examination.

Economic Life in Ancient China

Agriculture, of course, continued to be the basis of the Chinese economic life. The plough began to replace the digging fork and improvements were made in flood control and irrigation. One of the responsibilities of the government was to co-ordinate and direct the activities of the great number of agricultural workers and to regulate the use of water. The Hwang-Ho, as you know, was notorious for its floods and various schemes were devised to store and use the water. The removal of silt after floods was also a government concern, along with the digging of canals.

The growing of silkworms and the spinning and weaving of silk combined agriculture and industry. Under the Hans, silk was a principal item of export.

Improvements in pottery-making continued and it was soon to develop into a distinct Chinese art. Other crafts included gold and silver work and the carving of jade which was another speciality of the Chinese. Jade was called 'the sound stone'. When properly cut and struck, it gave a musical tone. Lacquer, the natural product of a tree, was also used in making articles of beauty and utility. The casting of bronze boxes worked with lacquer was perfected. Many varieties of bronzes were produced. Bronze mirrors, decorated with geometrical designs, were exquisite objects.

With the establishment of stable government trade increased. Towns developed into commercial centres. Two main roads were built across the Great Wall to carry on trade with the West. Caravan routes to Roman frontiers were guarded to protect transport of merchandise. Trade with the Romans across the steppes of Central Asia flourished. The Chinese sold iron goods, silk, pottery, and other handicrafts and got silver and gold in return. Copper coins were used in business transactions.

Chinese Religions and Philosophy

The two major religions of ancient China are Taoism and Confucianism. The teachings of two great Chinese philosophers, Lao-tse and Confucius, are associated with Taoism and Confucianism.

Lao-tse, which means the 'Older Master', is said to have been born in 604 B.C. He is said to have written a short book, *Tao te King*, which contains the essence of Taoism. Tao means 'the way', the central principle of the universe.

Taoism preaches the virtues of a simple life and the denial of selfishness.

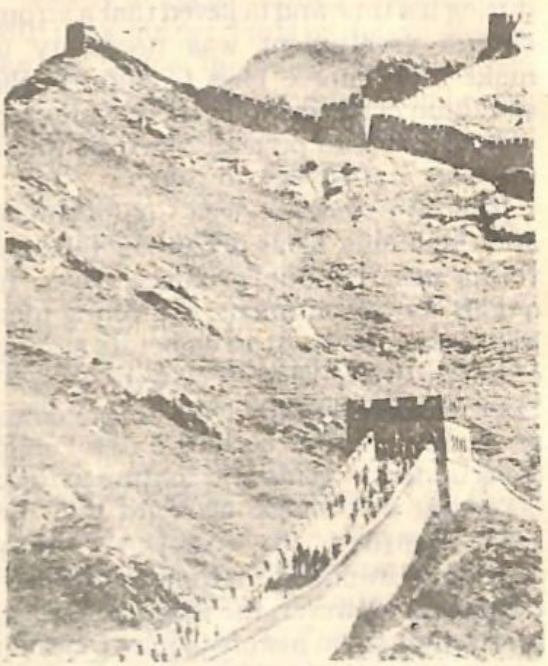
Confucius, or King Futse, as the Chinese call him, was born into an aristocratic family and lived from 551 to 479 B.C. He was thus a contemporary of Mahavira and the Buddha. Throughout his life he was primarily concerned with government, the best way to rule over a state and the people. He taught rules of conduct for society and stressed relationships between man and man. He did not say much of the gods or of death, but emphasized right conduct suited to particular occasions. He constantly asked his pupils to revere the customs of the past. Respect for elders and ancestors—the solidarity of the family—was a central point in his teachings.

While Lao-tse was more concerned with the individual, Confucius thought more in terms of society. Confucius emphasized moral and social order for society. He thus laid great emphasis on social morality. To him, 'Five Relationships' were important: between ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother and older friend and younger friend. In course of time, Confucianism became rigid, formal and conservative. Taoism which had originally preached enlightenment and inner joy for the individual, got lost in magical practices.

Buddhism was brought into China by Indian and Indonesian traders and missionaries during the Han rule. In time, Buddhism came to have a great influence on cultural life. The millions of Buddhists in China were mainly of the Mahayana sect.

Achievements of Ancient China

Architecture—With the establishment of stable government, palaces and pagodas were constructed in the capital cities of ancient China. The Great Wall is a mighty



3.7 A part of the 2400 km long Great Wall of China

monument to the building skill of ancient China. This wall, built of stone and earth to a height of 6 metres and extending over 2400 kilometres of hills and valleys, links the east coast with the mountains of the west right across northern China. The wall was wide enough for a carriage to go through. At intervals of every few hundred metres were located watch-towers for warriors. Such a large, sturdy construction must have taken decades and an army of labourers to complete it.

Painting—Painting in China was a branch of calligraphy, and the brush that was used for writing was also used for painting. Many pictures were scrolls that could be rolled up and preserved. The emphasis was on conveying moods and suggesting ideas through perfect forms. There was, therefore, very little fidelity to real objects and we can say that the

Chinese paintings aimed at suggesting rather than describing. Although such objects as the lotus, dragon and horse were popular motifs of art, the stress was on beauty.

Language and Literature—The Chinese script was standardized by the Chin ruler and an official list of 3300 characters was compiled. With the political unification of China, this script was adopted all over the country. In the course of centuries, many new characters were added and the script became more artistic. Though the script was the same throughout the country, there were differences in the spoken languages. The Chinese script played an important part in the cultural unification of China. The Chinese script spread to other countries also. It influenced the Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese scripts.

In the early times the writing material used by the Chinese was bone. Later silk was used as a material for writing on with a brush of camel hair. It was the use of brush that helped make the writing so artistic. In the 1st century A.D., paper was invented and this brought about a great revolution in writing. Paper was made from the bark of trees, bamboo, and rags. The invention of paper brought the knowledge and use of writing to more people because paper was cheaper than silk to write on. The invention of paper and its importance in spreading knowledge within and outside China makes it one of the great contributions of China to the world.

The growth of the Chinese script and language and of writing materials led to the writing of a very rich literature and its preservation for posterity. Besides classical literature, the philosophers wrote beautiful prose in the language of the people. The Chou rulers were patrons of poetry. Later, beautiful elegies were written. Under the Hans, an ornate style of poetry, describing gardens and palaces, developed.

Some of the first historical works in the world were written in China. The *Annals*, which is said to have been written by Confucius, is the history of the state of Lu from 722 to 481 B.C. Later the art of historical writing was further developed and lively accounts of the life of the people were written. Each dynasty compiled its own history. The tradition of histories of dynasties became so strong that 26 dynastic histories covering China's entire history up to 1912 have come down to us. The pattern of these histories was set by Ssu-ma Chien, who probably lived in the 1st or 2nd century B.C., and is commonly remembered as the Herodotus of China. The histories contain information about the events in the court, the genealogies of emperors and tables of officials, the lives of important persons and a vast amount of information on various subjects, such as administration, geography, astronomy, and music.

Science and Technology—One of the greatest achievements of the Chinese in engineering was the building of canals. These canals were used for navigation as well as for irrigation. Some of these were more than a hundred kilometres long.

The Chinese made several contributions to science. They compiled lists of stars and constellations and could explain many astronomical phenomena like the eclipse. They knew the causes of eclipses and could accurately predict them. By the 2nd century A.D., many Chinese astronomers believed that the sun, moon and all the stars float freely in empty space. In the 4th and 5th centuries A.D., maps showing the position of various

stars were made. The water clock too was invented. The problem of floods impelled the Chinese to study rains, clouds, and seasons.

In mathematics the Chinese used the decimal system. Zero, however, was unknown to them for a long time. The Chinese numerical system was multiplicative; that is, to write 300 they would write the characters for 100 and 3. The Romans wrote 300 by repeating the sign for 100 (C) three times (CCC). The abacus was invented in China and was used for calculations in business. Long before the Europeans, the Chinese had more or less accurately calculated the value of π (pronounced 'pi').

The Chinese wrote accounts of travel that contained information about the geography of other countries. But they thought that the earth was a square surrounded by sea on all sides. Like many other peoples, they considered their own country to be the centre of the earth. A very important Chinese contribution was made in *seismology*, the science of earthquakes. In the 2nd century A.D., they invented a seismograph. With the help of this instrument, the Chinese calculated the epicentre or the exact place where the earthquake began.

3.8 An ancient Chinese seismograph

The Chinese had a fair knowledge of human anatomy. They knew about a number of diseases and their remedies. They could distinguish between various infectious diseases and knew the symptoms of each. The relationship between health and diet was also known to them. They did not believe in priestly incantations to cure diseases.

It is interesting to know that the kite was an ancient Chinese toy and that the Chinese invented the umbrella.

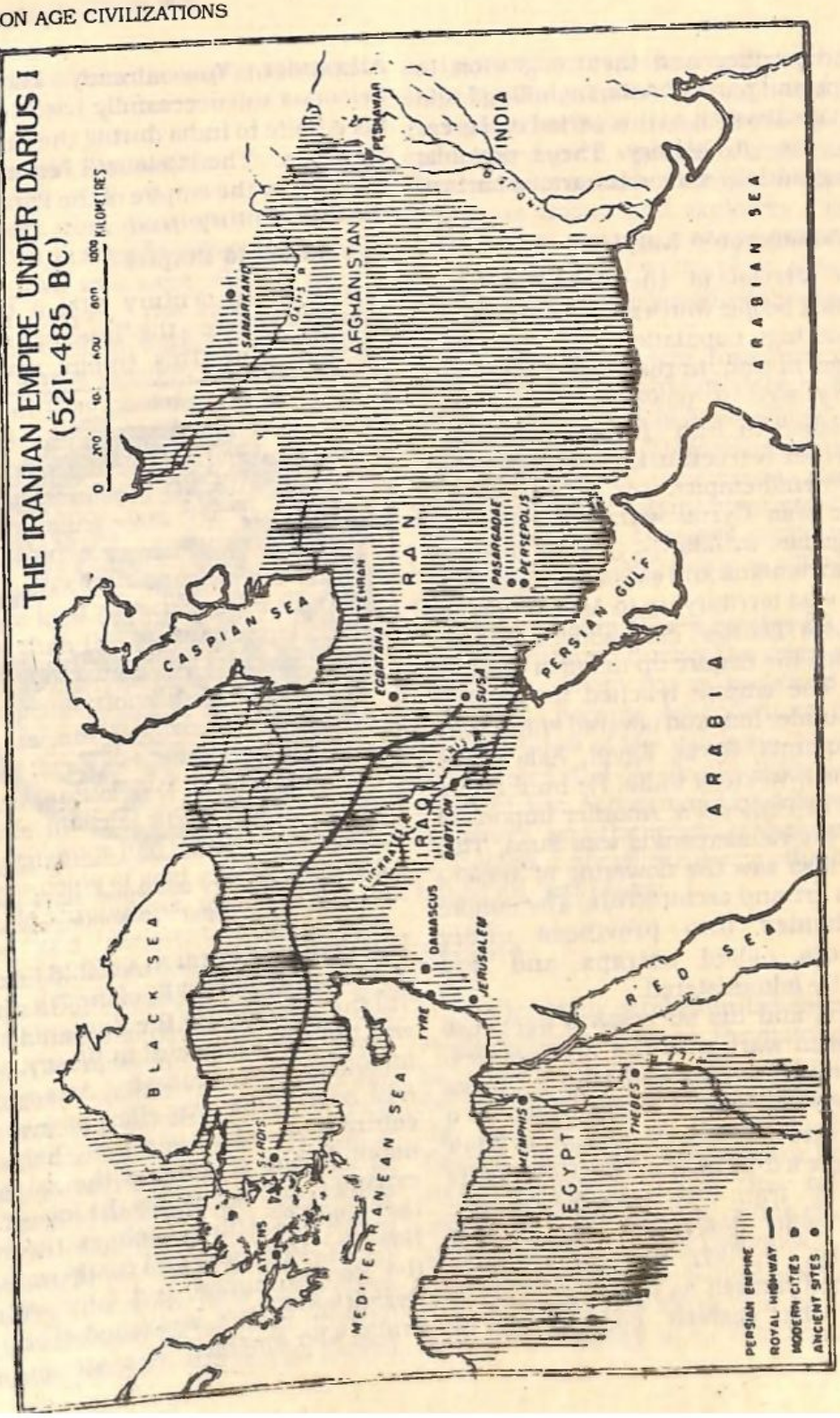
Most of the developments and inventions of the Chinese civilization were slow in reaching the outside world. For example, several centuries after the Chinese made paper, the Arabs learned the art and passed it on to Europe.

THE IRANIAN CIVILIZATION

Early History

Even though settled life in Iran began almost at the same time as in the neighbouring Mesopotamia, the growth of culture there was rather slow. Iran served as the connecting link between the Indus Valley and southern Mesopotamia as well as the transit route for the movement of tribes from Central Asia and the region around the Caspian Sea.

During the second millennium B.C. the eastern branch of the Indo-European-speaking peoples came to Iran. They were



The Iranian Empire under Darius I

nomadic tribes and their migration to Europe and parts of Asia, including India mentioned earlier, in this period is of great importance in history. These nomadic tribes gradually spread to various parts of Iran.

The Achaemenid Empire

The arrival of the Indo-European-speaking people who were absorbed in the pre-existing population led to many changes in Iran. In the middle of the 6th century B.C., a powerful empire was established in Iran. This empire which lasted over two centuries is known as the Achaemenid empire. The founder of this empire was Cyrus with his capital at Pasargadae. In 539 B.C., Cyrus defeated the Babylonians and extended his empire over a vast territory up to Asia Minor. His successor, Darius I (522-486 B.C.), further extended the empire up to north-western India. The empire reached its greatest extent under him and covered entire Iran, Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, Asia Minor and north-western India. He built a new capital at Persepolis. Another important city of the Achaemenids was Susa. This period also saw the flowering of ancient Iranian art and architecture. The empire was divided into provinces under governors called satraps and was efficiently administered.

Darius and his successors were also involved in wars with the Greek states. However, they were defeated by the Greeks and the Achaemenid empire was, as a consequence, weakened. Alexander dealt the empire a final blow during the reign of Darius III. Iran was occupied by the Greeks, who destroyed the city of Persepolis. In 301 B.C., Seleucus I established himself as the ruler of a large part of the eastern possessions of Alexander. You already know that Seleucus unsuccessfully tried to extend his empire to India during the time of the Mauryas. The Seleucid empire was followed by the empire of the Parthians in the 2nd century B.C.

The Sassanid Empire

In the 3rd century A.D., a new and powerful empire – the Sassanid empire – arose in Iran. This empire which was

3.9 A fourth century Sassanian silver plate. The Sassanian King, Shapur II, is hunting wild animals.

founded by Ardashir in A.D. 226 held sway in Iran up to the middle of the 7th century. Till the 5th century the Sassanid empire was the most powerful in West Asia and included Transcaucasia, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. An efficient system of centralized administration helped to maintain the stability of the empire, to expand it and to repulse the invasions of the nomadic tribes such as the Huns. However, their long and costly wars with the Roman empire and later with the Byzantine empire weakened them. The Arabs who emerged as a strong power

after the rise of Islam, conquered Iran in A.D. 651.

Economic and Social Life

In ancient Iran, most of the land was owned by kings, their friends and relatives and noblemen who were officials of the state and temples. The vast estates of these land owners were worked on by peasants whose position was not much better than that of serfs. The landlords also employed slaves for work on their estates. Most of the slaves were prisoners of war who were captured by Iran's armies during the many wars that they waged. The condition of peasants was generally miserable. In certain areas the peasants owned the land and they were therefore better off than those who worked on the estates of the landlords.

The upper sections of society were very prosperous and led lives of luxury. An important factor behind the prosperity of the upper sections of society was the large-scale internal and external trade. The Achaemenids had introduced the use of money—coins of gold and silver—on a large scale throughout the empire. The weights and measures were also standardized. A marvellous network of roads was built by the Achaemenids, and it was the finest in the world before the Romans. The most famous of the roads built by them connected Susa near the Persian Gulf with Sardis in Asia Minor—a distance of 2500 kilometres. This road is called the Royal Road. Road-building on such a large scale was made possible by an efficient system of taxation which provided ample resources to the state for undertaking this work. As a result there was a tremendous increase in internal trade throughout the vast empire as well as in trade with southern Europe. The ship building industry facilitated the growth of maritime trade. The kings also encouraged great voyages of exploration. Iran in ancient times produced a number of famous sailors and explorers. One of them, Scylax, undertook a voyage from the mouth of the Indus to Egypt on orders of Darius. This voyage lasted two years and a half.

The kings of ancient Iran took great pains in expanding agriculture by building subterranean canals in areas where water was in short supply. They also encouraged the cultivation of new crops. Certain technological innovations were introduced like the water-mill. Breeding of silk-worms was started on a large scale as silk was in great demand.

The ownership of vast estates by a few people continued during the reign of the Sassanids. Their power increased and even kings became dependent on them. The condition of the peasants, however, deteriorated. The dazzling splendour of the court of the Achaemenid and Sassanid emperors, and the might of their armies concealed a social structure which was based on oppression.

Religion

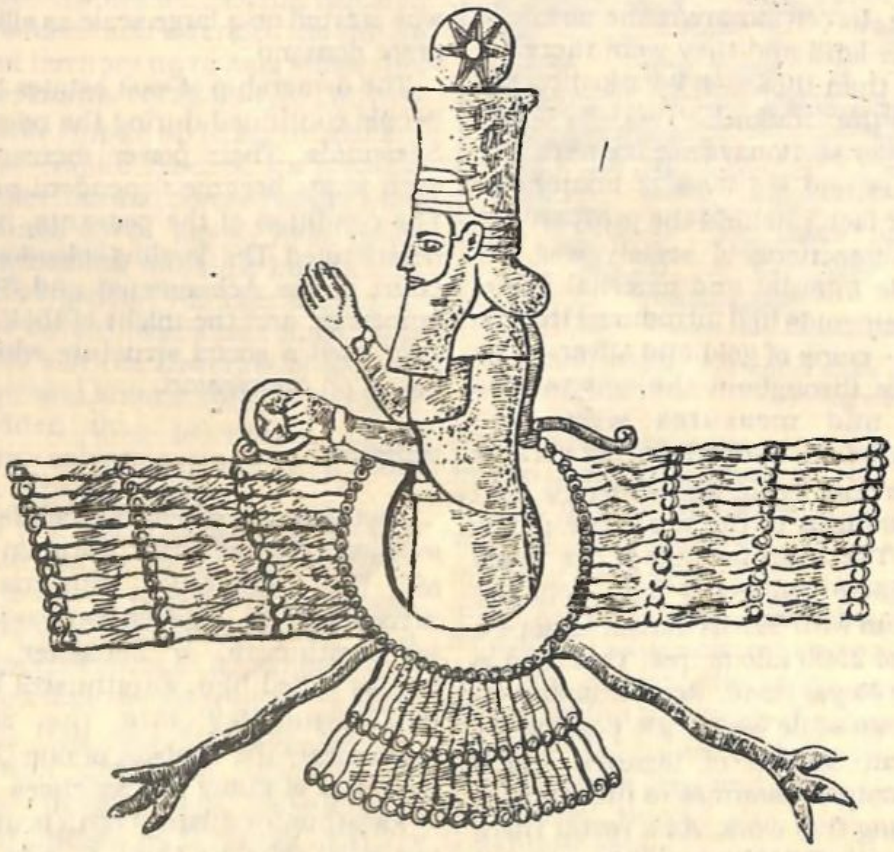
A wide variety of religious beliefs existed in ancient Iran. However, the main religion of the ancient Iranians was Zoroastrianism. This religion was founded by Zarathustra, or Zoroaster, as the Greeks called him. Zarathustra brought new principles into the religion, particularly the concept of one God, and purged it of many evil practices.

Zarathustra's date of birth is uncertain but most scholars think that he lived in the 7th century B.C. His ideas and

teachings are recorded in the *Zend*, the holy book of the Parsis. Zarathustra said that the world consists of two forces, good and evil. The universe and all life represent a struggle between good and evil, light and darkness. The god, Ahura Mazda, represents the forces of good, and Ahriman, the forces of evil. The struggle that is constantly going on between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman would eventually be decided in favour of the former and the world would then become a righteous world. Man, however, is not a passive spectator in this struggle. He must cultivate a number of virtues to be an active fighter on behalf of Ahura Mazda. The sun and fire came to be worshipped as visible symbols of Ahura Mazda, who represents light.

The ancient Iranians also had a number of minor gods— Indra, Vayu, Mithru, Naon Raithya and Verethraghna—who can easily be identified with the Vedic gods. This similarity is due to the fact that the ancient Iranians and the Vedic Aryans came from a common stock of Indo-European-speaking people and the Vedic Aryans came to India through Iran. These two peoples naturally had a number of common gods.

Both Judaism and Christianity are indebted to Zoroastrianism. The concept

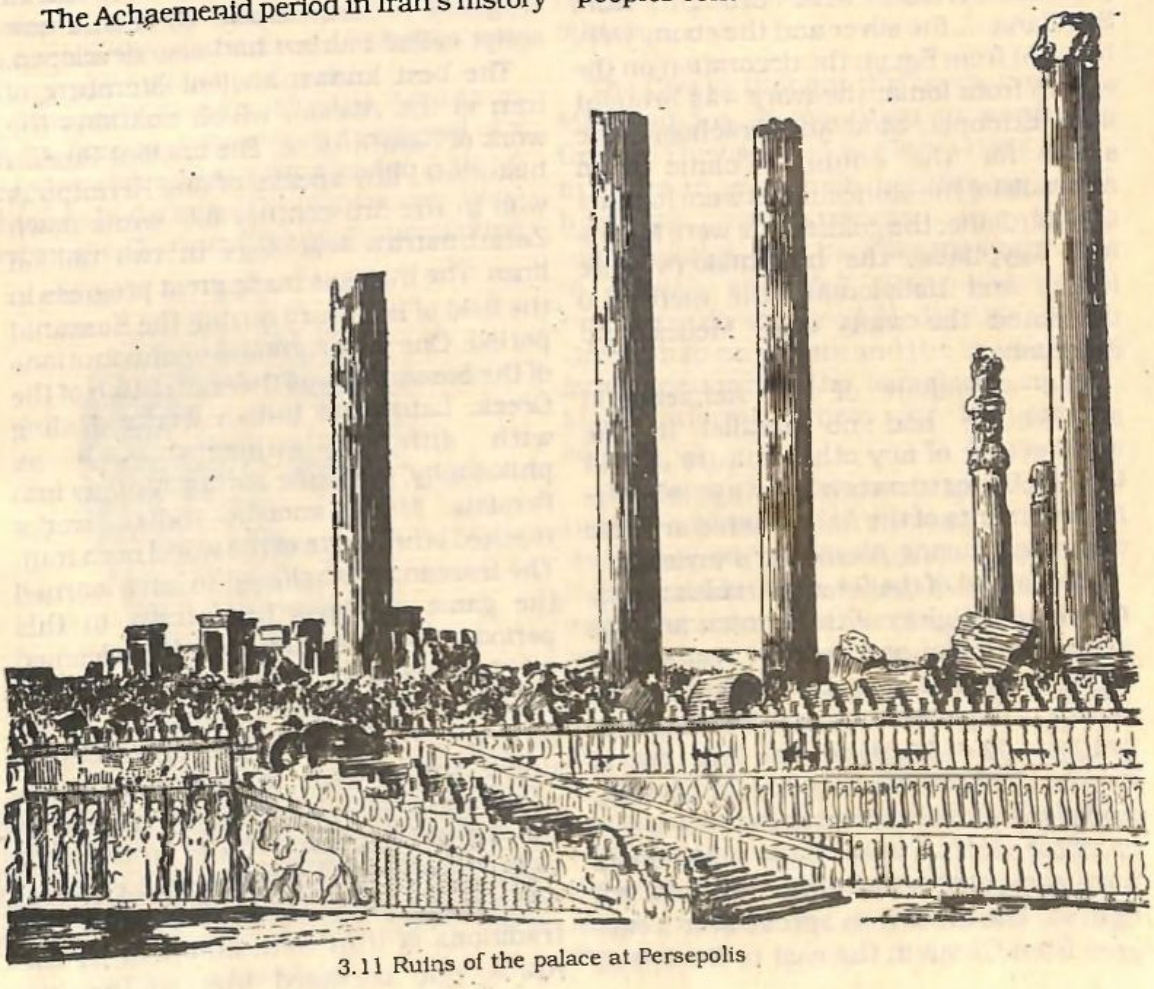


3.10 The symbol of Ahura Mazda carved above the head of King Darius

of Satan in the Jewish religion and the story of the Wise Men in the Bible also owe their origin to the writings of Zoroaster. Some other ideas in Christianity also seem to have have come from Zoroastrianism; for instance, the resurrection of the dead, the final triumph over the devil, and the Last Judgement when the good are separated from the evil and justice is done. The Parsis in India are the followers of Zoroastrianism.

Art and Culture

The Achaemenid period in Iran's history is notable for its architectural splendour as seen in the monumental buildings in the cities of Susa, Pasargadae and persepolis. Zoroastrianism was a simple religion and did not require huge temples. Therefore, most of the Achaemenid architecture was secular in character. The palaces of the Achaemenid emperors were built with great care and were intended to dazzle the visitors with their pomp and splendour. The artists and the materials for the palaces were drawn from every part of the empire and the artistic traditions of many different peoples contributed to their construction.



3.11 Ruins of the palace at Persepolis

An interesting inscription of the great emperor Darius I has been discovered from his palace at Susa, which relates how the palace was constructed, and gives us some idea of the beautiful architecture of the Achaemenids. The inscription reads: "The Babylonians worked at excavating the site, covering it with gravel, and manufacturing sun-dried bricks; the cedar timber was brought from Lebanon by the Assyrians, the Carians and the Ionians; the oakwood was brought from Gandhara and from Carmania; the gold was brought from Sardis and Bactria...the precious stones were brought from Sogdiana.....the silver and the ebony were brought from Egypt; the decoration on the wall is from Ionia; the ivory was brought from Ethiopia, Sind and Arachosia; the stone for the columns came from Aphrodisia; the stonecutters were Ionians and Sardians; the goldsmiths were Medes and Egyptians; the brickmakers were Ionian and Babylonian; the men who decorated the walls were Medes and Egyptians."

The splendour of the Achaemenid architecture had no parallel in the architecture of any other culture of that time. Unfortunately many of the achievements of the Achaemenid art were destroyed during Alexander's invasion.

The period of the Sassanid rule saw the revival of the glory of the Iranian art. The art of bas-relief, particularly, reached its highest point under the Sassanids. The relief art depicted scenes of hunting and battles. The Iranians in this period excelled in gem-cutting, metal carving, and glass-moulding and in the weaving of valuable cloth. Plates, cups and bottles were decorated with human and animal figures. The art of Iran spread over a vast area from China in the east to Europe in the west. The art and architecture of medieval Europe was particularly influenced by the ancient Iranian art and architecture.

Language and literature also made great progress during the ancient times in Iran. During the Achaemenid empire, while the official language was Aramaic, old Persian also was widely used. Aramaic was used over a very wide area of Asia and its script influenced the scripts of many Asian languages. Old Persian also was written in Aramaic script. The Sassanids revived old Persian and made it the official language of their empire. By then a new script called Pahlavi had also developed.

The best known ancient literature of Iran is the *Avesta*, which contains the work of Zarathustra. The ancient Roman historian Pliny speaks of one Hermippus who in the 3rd century B.C. wrote down Zarathustra's teachings in two million lines. The Iranians made great progress in the field of literature during the Sassanid period. One of the greatest contributions of the Sassanids was the translation of the Greek, Latin and Indian works dealing with different subjects such as philosophy, medicine and astronomy into Persian. Many ancient Indian works reached other parts of the world from Iran. The Iranians are believed to have learned the game of chess from India in this period. The Sassanid rulers welcomed scholars from different countries. Because of their religious toleration many Greek scholars who had suffered persecution under the church in Greece found a shelter in Iran. The broad-mindedness of the rulers of Iran led to the flowering of their culture and there began a cultural renaissance in Iran. The cultural traditions of Iran were inherited by the Arabs who occupied Iran in the 7th

century. The Arabs transmitted the cultural achievements of ancient Iran to other parts of the world.

THE GREEK CIVILIZATION

Early Greeks

The Greeks came to the region of the Aegean sea from the north, probably from the Danube river valley. They spoke an Indo-European language. Each group that came into the Aegean region had its own name—Achaeans, Ionians and Dorians. Soon all began to call themselves *Hellenes*, whcih means Greeks. So various forms of the word 'Hellenes' are often used instead of Greek.

The early Greeks, like the Aryans in India, lived in tribes, each composed of a number of families under a leader. A group of tribes had a king. The main occupations were agriculture and herding, and making of pottery, swords and ornaments. Trade was mainly by bartering. Fighting, adventure, and conquest were 'the spice of life'.

3.12 Greek god Zeus

The religious beliefs of the early Greeks were very simple. They had many gods whom they imagined to be like human beings, though more powerful and immortal. Zeus was the god of the sky and hence caused thunder. Poseidon, god of the sea, raised storms that sank ships. Apollo, the sun god, could reveal the future. Athena was the goddess of victory and patroness of the arts. Dionysus was the god of wine—and there were many others.

The Greeks thought their gods lived on Mt. Olympus, a mountain in northern Greece. They wanted to please their gods in order to gain such benefits as good harvests or success in their undertakings—not because they believed in Heaven and Hell. Their gods had nothing to do with good deeds or sins. The Greeks had no priests and the head of the family performed the sacrifices—or the king performed them for the entire community.

The Greeks had no knowledge of writing until around 800 B.C., but the stories of their life were passed on in folk-songs and ballads in which they sang of their heroes and conquests. When writing developed, poets began to record the stories. Two poems, credited to a poet named Homer, provide a great deal of information about the life and institutions of the early Greeks. The *Iliad* is the story of the siege and destruction of the city of Troy, on the western coast of Asia Minor. The *Odyssey* describes the adventures and return home, from Troy, of a Greek hero, Odysseus.

Rise of City-States

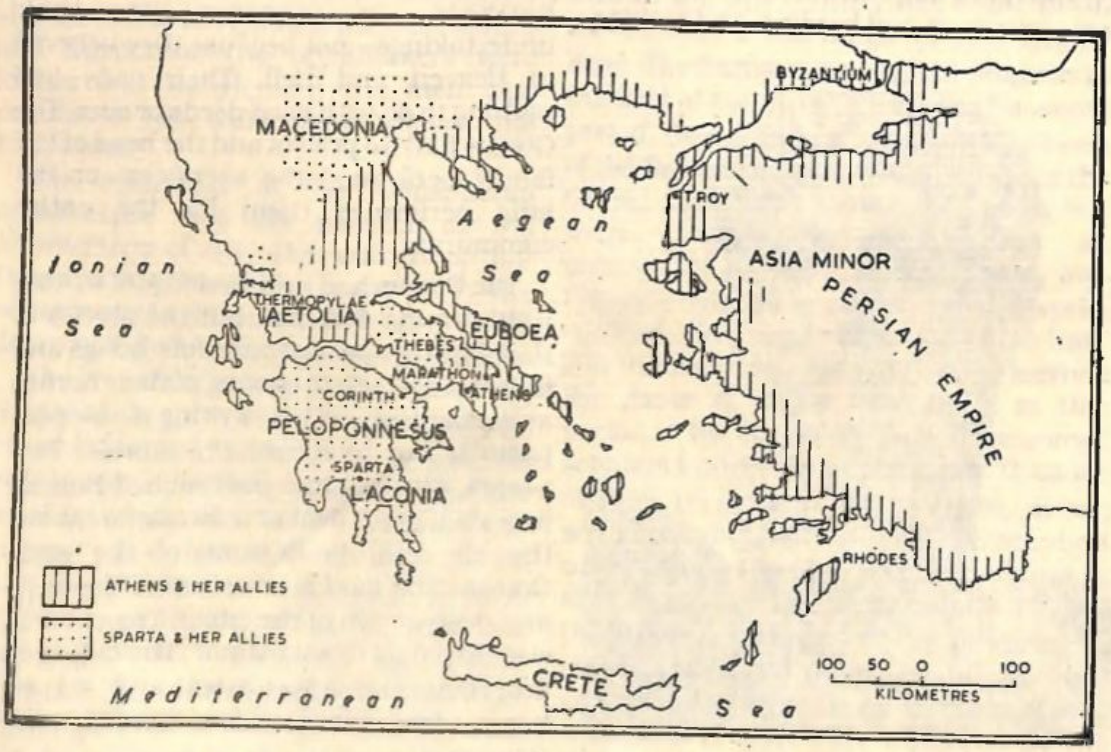
Around 800 B.C., groups of Greek villages began joining into larger units to form city states. At the highest point in a city-state, an *acropolis* or citadel was built for defence and the city spread out around the acropolis. Many such cities grew up all over Greece and on a number of islands—Sparta, Athens, Macedonia, Corinth, Thebes and others.

At first, the city-states were ruled by monarchs. Then wealthy landowners took over political power and abolished the monarchy. The population of the cities increased. Commerce and industry expanded and a rich middle class developed in the cities. This class joined with the poor farmers to lessen the power of the landowners. This conflict resulted in the rise of dictators, or *tyrants*, as the Greeks called them. In course of time, the dictatorships also were overthrown, and most of the states established either a kind of democracy, or an *oligarchy*—rule by a few rich men.

The city-states had many common features, but each had its own character. There were clashes amongst them but, due to difficulties of travel and communication, they could not be unified in a single state. The two most important city-states on the mainland were Sparta and Athens.

The State of Sparta

Sparta was different from most of the other Greek city-states—in part because of its geographical location and the



Greece in the Age of Pericles

mountains that cut it off from the others. The Spartans' chief concern was with militarism and war so much so that the word 'spartan' is often used to mean militaristic. The Spartans trained their boys, from the age of seven, to endure hardship and pain, to be fierce, skilful fighters. This was their 'education'. All citizens able to bear arms were soldiers. They spent all their lives in barracks.

A large number of people living in the state of Sparta were slaves and it was they who did the work, leaving the citizens free to pursue the arts of war and government. The main duties of the Spartan kings were of a military nature. A council of nobles and an assembly supervised the work of administration, elected officials and controlled education. But Sparta's government was *by* and *for* the military. Only those citizens whose income qualified them for a certain military rank were members of the assembly.

Sparta's slave system ultimately resulted in the enslavement of the Spartans themselves. The slaves were always rebellious and the states had to strengthen its forces constantly to suppress them. No Spartan went out unarmed. Living from childhood to the age of 60 in barracks under the strictest discipline meant that Spartans had no time for family life or for learning. They did not allow trade and travel for fear that new ideas would destroy their system. Spartans were fine soldiers, but they contributed little else to Greek culture. Their poetry and songs concerned only military glory.

The State of Athens

The city-state of Athens developed along lines quite different from Sparta. The territories it ruled had been occupied gradually and peacefully and militarism had not developed. Athens had excellent harbours and mineral deposits. Athenians built a prosperous trade and a culture which was predominantly urban.

In the 7th century B.C. Athens' government changed from monarchy to oligarchy. In this period most of the fertile land passed into the hands of nobles. Many peasants mortgaged their lands and, later, themselves and their families to pay their debts. Ultimately they were deprived of their lands and reduced to the status of slaves.

3.13 Pericles

But, besides the nobles and slaves, Athens had some free people—the *demos*. They were free peasants, labourers, artisans and traders. Some of them were rich. All these were dissatisfied with the rule of the nobles. In 594 B.C., their struggle resulted in the appointment of Solon as the new magistrate with authority to carry out reforms. Solon abolished all mortgages, freed Athenians who had become slaves due to debts, and abolished enslavement of Athenians for debt. However, he did not free the slaves brought from other countries. Solon revived the assembly and all free Athenian men were members of it. The judicial system was reorganized and presiding officers of the law courts could be elected by the citizens.

Athenian democracy reached its greatest heights under the leadership of Pericles—469-429 B.C. A board of ten generals, elected by the assembly, acted as a kind of cabinet, such as we have today. Pericles was the president of this board for about 15 years. The generals were responsible to the assembly and thus could not become dictators. There were a number of popular courts, and cases were decided by juries whose members were drawn from all classes of citizens by lot.

Under Athenian democracy, political rights and freedoms were limited to the citizens. And during the time of Pericles, the citizens constituted a minority of the total population.

Wars and the End of Greek Democracy

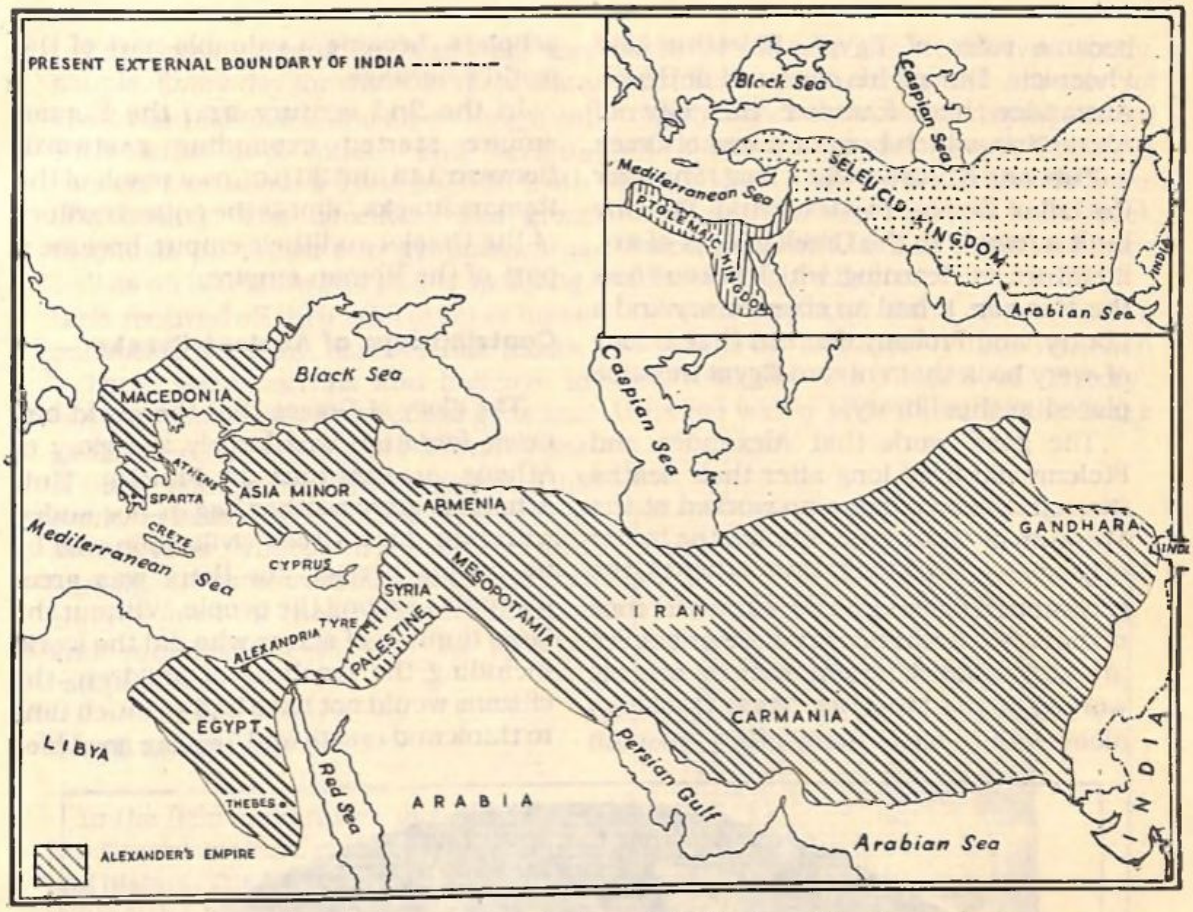
In the 5th century B.C., the Athenian democracy was engaged in two wars which spelled the end of its greatness. The first of these wars was against the large and powerful Iranian empire and its king, Darius. He had already conquered all the countries lying between the Indus and Asia Minor and came across the Aegean to conquer Greece. His large army supported by a vast fleet landed at Marathon near Athens. For the first time, the whole of Greece united to fight a common enemy. The Greek armies, though much smaller in number, fought fiercely and drove away the Iranians at the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.

An Iranian army returned to punish the Greeks ten years later but met with little success. This time they were met at the pass of Thermopylae by a small band of Spartans, who defended the narrow pass to the last man. The Iranians burnt the city of Athens, but were finally compelled to withdraw. This war made Athens the dominant state of Greece.

The Peloponnesian war, between Athens and Sparta from 431 to 404 B.C., ended in tragedy for Athens. During the wars with Iran, Athens had formed a league with a number of other Greek states. After the war she transformed this league into a naval empire for the advancement of her own interests. Spartans were afraid of her growing power. There had always been hostility between Sparta and Athens. At this time, most of the Greek states joined one side or the other, and the long war ended in the defeat of Athens and the destruction of her democracy. Athens became a subject state of Sparta. The Peloponnesian war marked the beginning of the end of the 'Glory that was Greece'. The following years were full of fighting that exhausted the Greek states.

Alexander's Empire

Philip of Macedonia conquered most of



The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Alexander's Empire. The inset shows the Hellenistic world in the 3rd century B.C.

the states in the years following Athens' defeat. Then his son, Alexander, inherited his armies and set out—at the age of 20—to conquer the world. During the thirteen years from 336 to 323 B.C., he compelled all Greece to accept his leadership and conquered the Achaemenid empire, the largest and the most powerful at the time. This brought him to the borders of India where he defeated king Porus on the Jhelum in 326 B.C. He sailed down the Indus and then returned to Mesopotamia where he died of fever in 323 B.C. at the age of 32.

Alexander's conquests brought many important changes to the world. Trade between Europe and Asia was developed. Many new cities were founded.

When Alexander died, his generals divided his empire among themselves. General Seleucus who got Iran, Mesopotamia and Syria, later attacked India but was defeated by Chandragupta Maurya. But this war led to the establishment of friendly relations between the Seleucid empire and the Mauryan empire.

Ptolemy, another general of Alexander,

became ruler of Egypt, Palestine and Phoenicia. During his conquest of Egypt, Alexander had founded the city of Alexandria, which became a seat of Greek culture and education for a long time after the fall of Greece. In Alexandria, Ptolemy built a temple to the Greek godess of art, literature and learning, which is known as the *Museum*. It had an observatory and a library, and Ptolemy decreed that a copy of every book that entered Egypt must be placed in this library.

The good work that Alexander and Ptolemy did lived long after their deaths through the scholars who worked at the Museum of Alexandria. Euclid, the father of geometry, lived here; Eratosthenes, the geographer, calculated the circumference of the earth; Archimedes whose principles are still studied by children in schools worked at the Museum. Their teachings along with those of many other Museum scholars, became a valuable part of the world's heritage.

In the 2nd century B.C., the Roman empire started expanding eastward. Between 146 and 30 B.C., as a result of the Roman attacks, almost the entire territory of the Greeks and their empire became a part of the Roman empire.

Contributions of Ancient Greeks

The glory of Greece that the world has never forgotten was largely the glory of Athens at the time of Pericles. But, Athenian glory neither began nor ended with him. Also, Greek civilization was by no means perfect, for there was great inequality among the people. Without the large number of slaves who did the work, including the teaching of children, the citizens would not have had so much time to think and create and 'live the good life'.

3.14 Greek education. This painting on the 5th century B.C. bowl shows a boy learning to play the lyre and another boy reciting Homer's *Iliad*.

For Greek citizens life was easy and simple. Every day for the men there were sports and exercises, and an evening meal with wine and music and serious conversation about life and politics, truth and beauty. The education laid great emphasis on music and gymnastics as well as on literature and public speaking. Girls received all their education at home and took little, if any, part in public affairs.

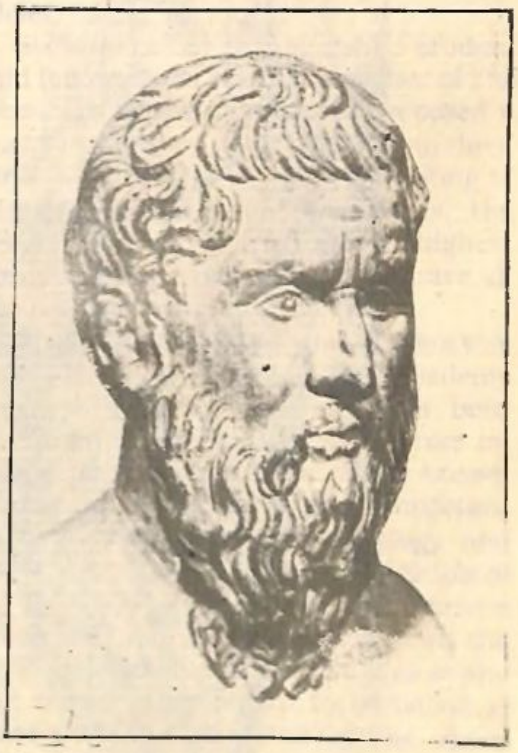
There were festivals and holidays to celebrate marriages and honour gods and goddesses. The world still celebrates one of them, namely the Olympic games. This event, to honour the god Zeus, was held every four years. Spectators and participants came from all over Greece and enjoyed open-air theatre, poetry reading and conversation as well as athletic competitions.

Greek Literature

In the field of literature our 'gifts' from the Greeks include epics, poetry, drama and history. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are among the best epics of the world. The shorter Greek poems called *lyrics*, because they were sung to the music of the lyre, were composed to express the emotions of man. Sappho, the great woman poet, sang of the beauty of love and nature. Pindar, one of the greatest of the lyric poets, wrote poems to honour victorious athletes.

It was in drama—both tragedies and comedies—that the Greek literary achievement was supreme. The remains of Greek theatres can still be seen all over the Aegean region. The founder of Greek tragedy was Aeschylus, author of *Prometheus Bound*. Sophocles is considered the greatest of the Greek tragedians. He wrote *Oedipus Rex*, *Antigone* and *Electra*, plays which are admired all over the world even today. Euripides, another great master of tragedy, condemned war and sympathized with slaves and common people. One of his best-known plays is the *Trojan Women*. Aristophanes, the master of Greek comedy, ridiculed leading citizens in front of fun-loving audiences.

Greece produced some of the world's earliest great histories. Herodotus, often described as the 'father of history', travelled widely to write about the Greek wars with Iran. Thucydides described the war between Sparta and Athens. Plutarch, who wrote later, is known for his famous biographies, *Lives of Illustrious Men*.



3.15 Herodotus

Philosophy—Many schools of philosophy developed in Greece. One of these schools rejected the myths and superstitions about the nature of the physical world and attempted to give a rational explanation of it. Another school of philosophers believed that all matter was composed of atoms and that the

3.16 Raphael's painting of Plato and Socrates

differences in arrangement of these atoms resulted in different forms of life. The greatest philosopher of this school was Democritus who denied the existence of a spiritual world, or of the soul. Then there were the Sophists, meaning 'those who are wise'. Sophists believed that there was no absolute truth, but looked at every so-called truth in relation to its effect on human beings. 'Man is the measure of all things', they said. Their contribution to the growth of philosophy is great. In the words of a great Roman thinker, they 'brought philosophy down from heaven to the dwellings of men'.

The most famous philosophers of Greece were Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates believed that knowledge leads to right conduct and happiness, while ignorance breeds evil. He criticised the popular beliefs of the Athenians. After the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian war, he was condemned to die on the charge of 'corrupting the youth and introducing new gods' and was forced to drink poison. Actually, he merely encouraged them to question everything. His courageous words at his trial have inspired martyrs for centuries. The Greeks in power at this time could not accept his ideas.

3.17 Socrates' death from a 17th century book published in England

Socrates' most distinguished student and follower was Plato, the author of *The Republic*. In this book Plato proposed a society which would be divided into three classes – the lowest class consisting of farmers, artisans and merchants, the second class of soldiers, and the highest class of intellectuals who would have all the political power.

The greatest of Greek philosophers was Aristotle, a student at the Academy founded by Plato. Aristotle was both philosopher and scientist and wrote on many subjects. He studied all the known sciences of his time and made important contributions to medicine, biology and astronomy. He believed in the principle of the Golden Mean, that is, neither extreme luxury nor self-denial. He advocated the same principle in his political philosophy and wanted government to be based at some point between rule by the upper class and democracy.

Two important schools of philosophy later were Stoicism and Epicureanism. The Stoic school taught that man should accept his fate, since he cannot change it. According to the Stoics, serenity of mind is the goal all men should strive to attain.

They preached indifference to pleasure or pain, good or evil, but believed in the brotherhood of all men. Epicureans believed that the highest good for man is pleasure, but they aimed at tranquillity of mind rather than indulgence in pleasures. They believed that the gods had nothing to do with the affairs of men. They taught people to lead simple, virtuous and fearless lives in order to be happy.

Science—To the Greeks, science and philosophy were almost one because most philosophers tried to explain the nature of the physical world. The Greeks made many contributions to mathematics, especially to geometry as is seen in the work of Euclid and Pythagoras. In medicine, Hippocrates laid the foundations of modern medicine by insisting that 'every disease has a natural cause, and without natural causes, nothing ever happens'. He is known as the 'father of medicine'.

Many advances in science were made after Alexander's conquests. Aristarchus propounded the theory that the earth and other planets revolve round the sun. However, Ptolemy's belief that the earth was the centre of the universe was accepted as truth until the 16th century. Hipparchus made an approximately correct calculation of the diameter of the moon and the distance between the earth

3.18 The universe according to Ptolemy. Ptolemy's theory that the earth was the centre of the universe remained popular in Europe till the 16th century

3.19 The Parthenon

3.20. Inscription of the 'Law against Tyranny', Athens, 336 B.C. The inscription reads : Should anyone, in an attempt at absolute power, rise up against the people or try to overthrow the democracy of Athens—whoever kills him shall be blameless.

and the moon. Eratosthenes calculated the circumference of the earth with a small error of about 320 kilometres. He also prepared a fairly accurate map of the globe and was the first to suggest that one could reach India from Europe by sailing west. Columbus used a map based on his ideas hundreds of years later.

In medicine, Alexandria became the great centre of study. Herophilus described the brain in detail and the function of arteries in the circulation of blood. Doctors practised dissection of human bodies for the first time and obtained a great deal of knowledge about human anatomy.

Art and Architecture—The excellence of Greek architecture and sculpture is best illustrated in their temples. Greek temples had a chamber which was used to house the statue of the god, and the chamber was surrounded by columns. The style of columns with different kinds of capitals was a special feature of the temples. These temples are also famous for their harmony of proportions. The temple to Athena, the Parthenon, is the best example of Greek architecture.

In sculpture, the Greeks expressed the values they admired in human beings like beauty and courage. They portrayed well-built, noble and muscular bodies to portray the beauty of man. The sculptures were mostly of gods and athletes but even gods were portrayed as human beings. Myron and Phidias are two best-known sculptors of ancient Greece. Myrôn is famous for his statue of the discus thrower; Phidias for his statue of Hermes holding the infant Dionysus. It was Phidias whom Pericles appointed to supervise the construction of the Acropolis in Athens.

The achievements of ancient Greeks are an important component of the heritage of mankind. They gave the world 'beauty' and

an example of freedom– freedom to think, speak and write all that man's mind can conceive; freedom to believe or not to believe; freedom to delight in living.

THE ROMAN CIVILIZATION

The Roman civilization, centred in Italy, is often considered a kind of bridge. Over this bridge the ideas of the Greeks and the civilizations farther east 'travelled' to Europe.

The Earliest Italians

Tne first inhabitants of Italy came from North Africa, Spain and France. After 2000 B.C. groups of Indo-Eurpoeans started migrating from over the Alps. Later, a number of Greeks settled in south Italy. A group of people known as the Etruscans also settled in a part of Italy. The people of Italy were the descendants of all these people.

The early Italians learned much from the Greeks– their alphabet, their religious beliefs and art. The name *Italia* itself was Greek. The Roman civilization started developing around the 6th century B.C. and reached its peak after the Greek civilization declined.

Early History of Rome

The city of Rome was founded about 1000 B.C. in the district of Latium, south of the Tiber river. The language of the ancient Romans, *Latin*, gets its name from Latium. Rome with its citadel on a high hill became dominant in the region.

The early Romans had a king, an assembly and a senate. The assembly consisted of all the male citizens of military age. The senate composed of heads of clans, was a powerful body and could veto any proposals of the king and the assembly.

Towards the end of the 6th century B.C. the king was overthrown and a republic was established. Under the republic the Romans conquered other parts of the peninsula, and by 265 B.C. controlled all of Italy.

The political system of the Roman republic consisted of two *consuls*, the senate and the assembly. The consuls were elected by the assembly for a period of two years. The senate was a powerful body and could veto the acts of the assembly. It also controlled public funds. The consuls led the armies in war, enforced laws and served as judges.

Roman society was divided into two classes– patricians and plebeians. The patricians were the upper class and consisted of the aristocracy and big landlords who controlled the senate. The plebeians were the workers, small farmers, artisans, small traders and soldiers. The plebeians had few rights. They were forced to pay heavy taxes and were often punished. In the beginning of the 5th century B.C. they revolted and the patricians were forced to grant them some concessions. They won the right to elect *tribunes* who could veto the acts of the consuls and the senate, that concerned the plebeians.

Another victory for the plebeians was the codification of laws in 454 B.C. The laws were written on tablets of wood and were known as the Laws of Twelve Tables. This enabled more people to know their legal rights and to resist violations of the laws by officials.

Wars with Carthage

The desire for new lands, after the

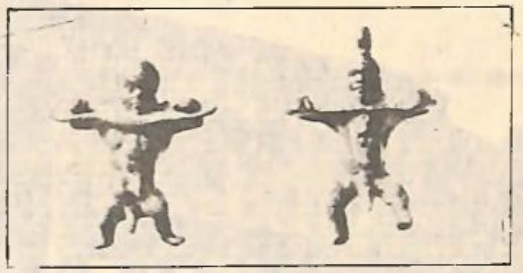
conquest of Italy, led the Romans into a series of wars with Carthage, a city on the north coast of Africa. Carthage was founded by the Phoenicians in the 9th century B.C., but had become independent. The Carthaginians controlled the trade from Egypt, Greece, Spain and other Mediterranean countries. Carthage had inherited the achievements of the Phoenicians who were skilful sailors and carriers of ideas. It was from the Phoenicians, through the Greeks, that the Romans got the capital letters of their alphabet. These are used even today.

Rivalry over Sicily brought Carthage and Rome to war. Sicily had fertile land and some Greek settlements were flourishing there. The danger of Carthaginian occupation of Sicily led the Romans to attack Carthage. The wars that followed, known as the Punic Wars, lasted from 264 to 146 B.C. The Carthaginians under their brave general Hannibal were defeated, the Romans set the city on fire and sold thousands of Carthaginians into slavery.

By the beginning of the Ist century B.C. the Romans had conquered Greece and Asia Minor and established a protectorate over Egypt.

Impact of Wars on Roman Society

All these wars had a very bad effect on Roman civilization. Because of the lakhs of people from the conquered territories who were sold in slavery, Rome became largely a society of slaves and slave-holders. Slaves were employed in agriculture, mining, road-building, workshops and on ships. They were brutally exploited and many became cripples at a young age. The luxuries of the Romans were based on this exploitation.



3.21 Inhuman tortures were inflicted on the slaves for minor offences. A common instruments of torture was the pillory. This was a wooden frame with holes in which the head and hands of slaves were locked.

The rich vied with one another in vulgar display of wealth and this led to the moral decay of the whole society. Fights between *gladiators*, or between a gladiator and a wild animal, became a popular Roman amusement. Special arenas or amphitheatres were built for these contests. The ruins of the Colosseum, one of the greatest of the arenas, can be seen in Rome.

This period of Roman history was full of trouble and conspiracy. There were revolts of the Roman poor who had lost their lands to the rich Romans. The tribunes elected by the people tried to put a limit on the land which a Roman could own and to distribute the rest among the landless Romans. However, they did not succeed, though many lost their lives in this effort. There were also slave uprisings in this period. The most important revolt by the slaves was that led by Spartacus in 73 B.C. About 70,000 slaves revolted and it took the highly trained Roman armies more than a year to suppress them. Thousands of the slaves who survived the defeat were massacred. Because of his bravery, Spartacus has become the subject of many heroic stories.

Wars naturally increased the political power of the army generals. The power of the assembly gradually declined and army

3.22 The Colosseum, Rome. This huge amphitheatre was built in the first century A.D. for staging bloody fights between gladiators and wild beasts.

leaders became more important. After the suppression of the great slave revolt, rivalry for power grew between two generals, Pompey and Julius Caesar. War between them followed and Pompey was murdered by his enemies in Egypt. Caesar remained in Egypt for some time, attracted by the captivating beauty of the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra. On his return to Rome, in 46 B.C., he made himself dictator. However, on the charge that Caesar intended to become king, he was assassinated in 44 B.C., in a senate meeting.

The Roman Empire

After the assassination of Caesar, power passed into the hands of Mark Antony and Lapidus, Caesar's friends, and Octavian, Caesar's grand-nephew. They attempted to hunt down all those who had conspired against Caesar. The leaders of the conspiracy, Brutus and Cassius, fled and organized a large army, but they were captured and slain.

In 37 B.C. Octavian became the most powerful man in the Roman empire. He ruled the Roman empire for 44 years under the titles of *Augustus*, which meant 'holy', and *Imperator*, meaning 'victorious general'. He also called himself Princeps, 'first citizen of the State'. The period of Roman history beginning with his rule up to A.D. 284 is called the Principate. He introduced many much-needed reforms. He reorganized the government of the conquered territories, stopped corruption and plunder, and strengthened law and order. His rule and the period following it were peaceful and are known in history as *Pax Romana*, which means 'Roman Peace'.

Most of the successors of Augustus were tyrants. One of the few capable ones was Marcus Aurelius who was in office from A.D. 161 to 180. He was an able general, philosopher and administrator. But his successors were incompetent—and there were many of them. In a period of 50 years, 26 different persons became rulers, and 25 of them were killed by conspirators. Finally, in A.D. 284, when Diocletian became ruler, he destroyed even the semblance of republican government. People were required to prostrate themselves in his presence. The senate lost all authority and the imperator or emperor became absolute.

From this time on, Roman civilization

The Roman Empire at its Greatest Extent

declined more rapidly. One of Diocletian's successors, Constantine, built a new capital called Constantinople on the site of ancient Byzantium. Not long after, the Roman empire was divided into two empires—Eastern and Western. The eastern part, as you will read in Chapter 5, was called the Byzantine empire. The Western part soon broke into many pieces. By A.D. 476 a chief of the barbarian invaders from the north established himself as 'King of Rome', and the once powerful empire was no more.

Life and Culture of the Romans

The early Romans lived mostly on agriculture and raised sheep and cattle. They made their own clothes from flax and wool, and used utensils of clay or wood. The Romans, like the Greeks and the Indo-Aryans, wore simple clothing. They attached great importance to family life. Every family worshipped Vesta, goddess of the hearth, who guarded the home. Though the father and husband had supreme authority in the family, the

Romans honoured their women, who took part freely in politics and the business of their husbands.

The Romans worshipped as many gods and goddesses as the Greeks. Jupiter sent rain for the crops; Mars helped them in war; Juno protected their women; Mercury carried their messages.

With the conquests of large parts of the world, the character of Roman life underwent important changes. The Roman society was now divided into four main classes—the aristocracy who owned large estates and held high public offices; wealthy merchants and bankers; the plebeians, small independent farmers and city-dwellers, many without work; and slaves who were the real producers.

In course of time, most middle class Romans started hating work and considered it fit only for slaves. They demanded support from the state. When Julius Caesar came to power, 320,000 Romans were being supported by the state. The condition of life for the slaves was very harsh. After long hours of work, they were often locked in prisons. Many wore heavy iron shackles even while they worked and slept. Some slaves fared better—for example, those who served as valets to the aristocrats, or as musicians and tutors. Some of them were highly accomplished and better educated than their masters.

The upper classes, the aristocracy and the merchants, lived in palatial houses and spent much of their time in luxurious baths, feasting and entertainment. City mobs as well as aristocrats attended gladiatorial contests and chariot races. Candidates for office often organized gladiatorial 'shows' to amuse and get votes for themselves. The life of a defeated gladiator depended on the spectators, who usually urged by shouting that the winner kill him. Both gladiatorial contests and chariot races were bloody affairs.

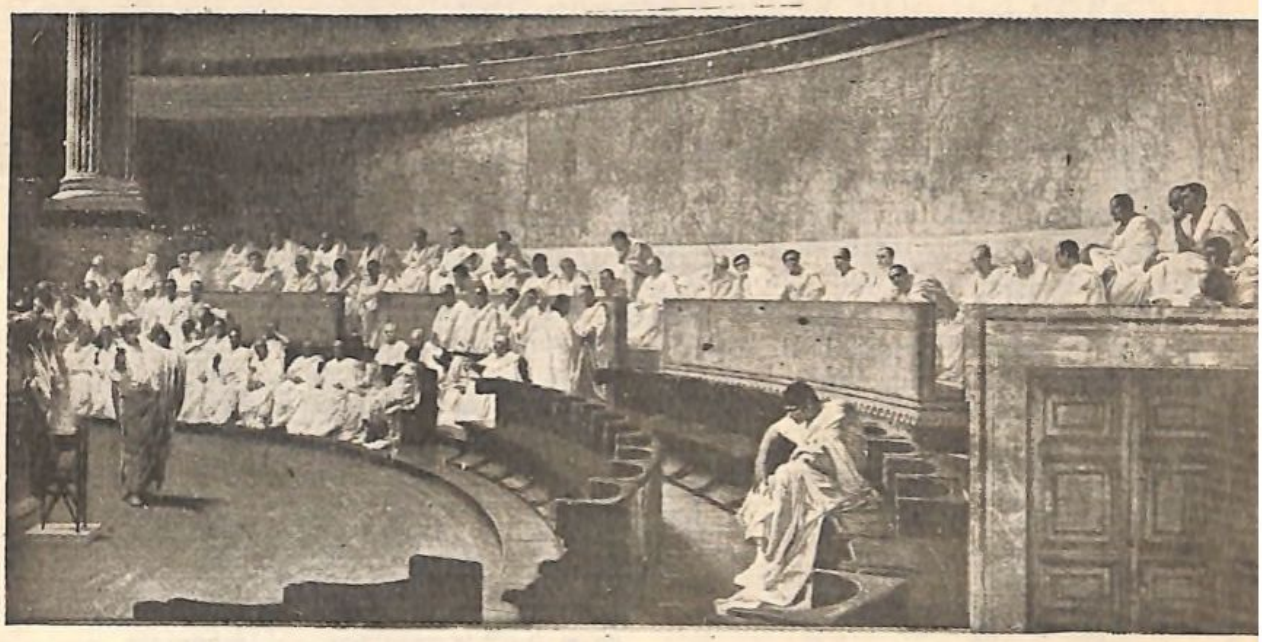
Contribution of the Romans

Roman conquests included Egypt, Babylon and Greece as well as western Europe and north Africa. Thus Romans and the western world became heirs to the achievements of eastern civilizations. The Romans made some contributions of their own, while making use of the ideas they inherited.

Laws and Government—Roman law and principles of governance are Rome's greatest contribution to the world. This achievement began with the Law of the Twelve Tables. In course of time Roman law developed into three main branches—civil law, applicable to Roman citizens; peoples law, applicable to all inhabitants of the empire; and natural law, which had more to do with philosophy than court cases. Many countries have borrowed from Roman ideas in developing their own systems of laws.

It was largely their system of law and administration that enabled the Romans to do what the Greeks could not do-to maintain order over a vast empire from a central government. Laws encouraged travel and boosted trade. The roads, built primarily for the movement of armies, were now used for exchanging goods with distant parts of the world, including China and India. Arikamedu near Madras was a Roman trading post in India. So complete was Rome's system of roads linking all parts of the empire that people could say 'All roads lead to Rome'. New cities grew along these routes, from Britain and Spain to Babylon.

The idea of republicanism was



3.23 A Senate meeting. The Senate was the most powerful Roman institution taking decisions affecting the lives of millions. This 19th century painting by Maccari shows Cicero speaking.

developed by the Romans. The idea was so strong that for a long time, the Roman rulers did not dare to assume royal titles, but called themselves servants of the state. For centuries, the senate and assembly were maintained in form even though Rome was ruled by tyrants. Of course the practice of enslaving conquered peoples soon destroyed any trends towards real democracy.

Language, Philosophy and Literature

The Romans developed their own alphabet after the Greeks, and the Latin language became the language of all educated people in western Europe. Latin words are still widely used in science, and Latin is the basis of several European languages– especially French, Spanish and Italian.

The Romans also adopted Greek philosophies. Epicureanism and Stoicism were popular in Rome. Lucretius, author of the poem, *On the Nature of Things*, was an Epicurean philosopher. He regarded belief in supernatural powers as a barrier to spiritual peace. He also did not believe in the existence of a soul, but advocated 'peace and pure heart' and not pleasure.

Cicero, a famous orator, believed, like the Stoics, in tranquillity of mind as the highest good and advocated indifference to pain and suffering. One of his most important contributions was his concept of political and natural law. Natural law, according to Cicero, was a law which could be discovered by reason and which guaranteed natural rights to all human beings. His speeches in the senate, are still imitated for its excellent style.

Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor about whom you have read earlier, was a Stoic philosopher. He wrote a book, *Meditations*, which explains his thoughts on how life should be lived. He believed that the purpose of life was not pleasure

but equanimity, which means the ability to live with reason and self-control in any situation. He practised what he taught. Though he had supreme power and unlimited wealth, he never lived in luxury. He wrote, "If any man is able to show me that I do not think or act rightly, I will change; for I seek the truth. He is injured who abides in error and ignorance." Another famous Stoic philosopher was Seneca who believed that all that happens is ordained by an all-powerful Providence and is always for the good.

The Roman civilization developed its literature and is noted for many achievements in poetry. Horace, in his poetry, combined the philosophical attitudes of Epicureanism and Stoicism. The following are a few lines from his *Odes.*

Be brave in trouble; meet distress
With dauntless front; but when the gale
Too prosperous blows, be wise no less
And shorten sail.

Virgil, another great poet, is famous for his *Aeneid*, written in the style of the Greek epics, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The *Aeneid* describes the wanderings and adventures of Aeneas, a legendary hero of Troy. Tacitus was the most famous Roman historian who, in his *Annals* and *Histories*, described the anarchy and corruption of the times in which he lived.

Art and Architecture— The Romans were great builders. Their achievements in architecture and engineering were second only to their work in law and administration. They were the inventors of concrete and could firmly cement bricks and stones together. They also introduced

3.24 The Trajan's Column, Rome. The column was built in A.D. 113 to commemorate Trajan's victories.

3.25 Details from the Trajan's column showing a battle scene

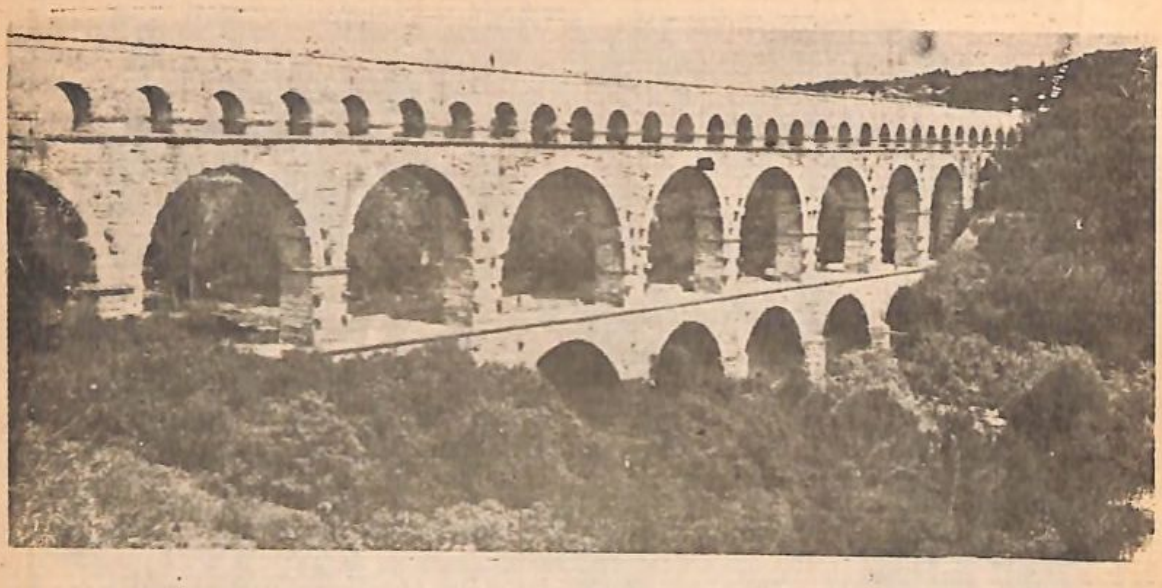
two architectural improvements—the arch and cupolas or domes. The Roman buildings often rose to two or three storeys with one row of arches standing over another. Their arch was round and was used in city gates, bridges, buildings, and monuments to victory. It was used in the Colosseum where gladiatorial contests were held and in aqueducts, many of which are still standing.

The Cupola which was a ceiling in the form of a huge inverted bowl can be seen in the Pantheon in Rome.

Water systems and roads are examples of Roman engineering. At the beginning of the Christian era, Rome had a population of about a million inhabitants. To provide water to the people in Rome and other cities, the Romans laid water-pipes from springs in the mountains which sloped down to the city. Some of these pipes were as long as 70 kilometres.

The Romans developed their sculpture on Greek models. But there was a difference. While the Greeks made their sculptures to depict their ideals, the Romans made use of the art to portray men as they were. Buildings were decorated with statues and reliefs. The Romans not only depicted the physical features truthfully but also character. However, much of the sculpture depicted emperors, and was placed in city squares as symbols of their authority and power. The Romans also developed the art of painting murals—large pictures covering entire walls.

Science—The Romans did some



3.26 The Pont-du-Gard. This was a 40 km long aqueduct through which water was carried to the city of Nimes in France.

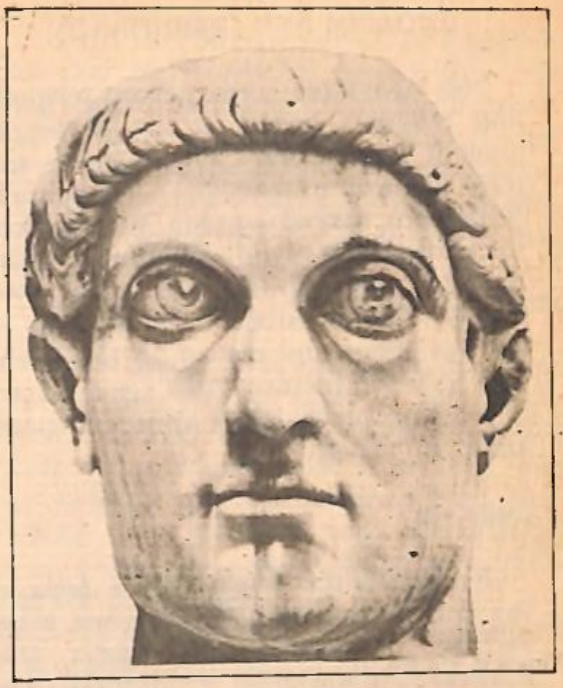
3.27 A marble relief of about A.D. 200, depicting Neptune, the Roman god of the sea, between two ships.

pioneering work in public services. They were the first to provide free medicine to poor patients. Except for these, they did not make any important contribution to science. Pliny the Elder and the Stoic philosopher Seneca each compiled an encyclopaedia. These, however, did not contain any original contributions. In medicine, Celsus wrote a treatise that contained information on surgery. Galen, a Greek scientist living in Italy, compiled a medical encyclopaedia and did some research of his own. He was one of the first to discover the circulation of blood.

Another contribution was the Roman calendar, which is still widely used with minor changes. However, there was nothing original in this calendar, as the groundwork in this field had been done earlier by the Egyptians and the Chinese. The names of some months in the present western calendar are derived from the names of Caesars. The month of July is named after Julius Caesar, August after Augustus, September, October, November and December are derived from Latin words meaning seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth. The names were apposite when first used because the Roman New Year began in March.

Why the Roman Civilization Decayed

The causes of decay of the Roman civilization are all related to imperialism. Imperialism destroyed democracy, encouraged slavery, created idle city mobs and political conflicts and corruption. Neither agriculture nor industry could thrive on slave labour. Slaves could have no interest in production that was all for the aristocrats and big landowners. No army, however powerful, could make them productive and prevent revolts.



3.28 Roman Emperor Constantine

The coming of Christian religion to Rome played a part in weakening the rule of emperors of a slave state. Christianity with its ideals of equality and love had great appeal for Rome's oppressed people. So great was its attraction that believers were willing to endure persecution by the emperors and even die for their faith. Constantine, in the 4th century A.D., was the first ruler to allow Christians to build churches and worship openly rather than in secret.

The final blow to the Roman empire came at the hands of northern invaders. They were German tribes— Goths, Franks, Visigoths, Vandals. They had long been making raids on Roman outposts, then on the city of Rome itself. Finally, in A.D. 476 Vandals overthrew the emperor who ruled the western empire and their chieftain established himself as king.

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

You have already read about religions and religious beliefs of the people in ancient India, Iran, China, Greece and Italy. Some of these religions, for example Buddhism, spread to areas far away from the land of their origin and influenced the life and culture in many countries. Two major religions arose in West Asia in ancient times and played an important part in world history. They are Judaism and Christianity. Both these religions arose in Palestine.

Judaism

Judaism is the religion of the Jews or the Hebrew people. The Hebrews were settled in Mesopotamia under the leadership of Abraham. From there they gradually migrated to Palestine. After 1700 B.C. many Hebrew tribes went to Egypt following a famine in Palestine. They were oppressed by the ruler of Egypt and, under the leadership of Moses, they migrated to Palestine in the 13th century B.C. Before Moses, the Hebrew tribes had a variety of gods. Moses united the different tribes, who now became the worshippers of Yahweh, or Jehovah, as their God. Moses' Ten Commandments, believed to have been revealed to him by God, laid down belief in a single God as well as laws to guide the life of 'the Chosen People', as the Hebrews called themselves.

In Palestine, the Hebrews established a united state with a monarchical form of government. The capital of the state was built at Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that the city of Jerusalem became a holy place to three major world religions—Judasim, Christianity and Islam. One of the famous kings of the Hebrews was Solomon, the legendary wise and just ruler. The united state of the Hebrews later split into two separate kingdoms Israel and Judah. By the 6th century B.C., both the kingdoms had been conquered, Israel by the Assyrians and Judah by the Babylonians. During the following centuries, Palestine was first conquered by the Iranians and later by Alexander. It later came under Roman influence and became a Roman province in A.D. 70. In this period, a large number of Jews left Palestine and settled in different parts of the world.

Religious Beliefs—The basic doctrine of Judaism is the belief in one God, Yahweh, who is represented as loving His people but visiting them with His vengeance when they go astray. Some later prophets of the Jews proclaimed that God loves man and is always ready to forgive a sinner who repents. Judaism preaches justice, mercy and humility. One of the important beliefs of the Jews is that the Messiah will one day appear on earth, purify the Hebrews and cleanse the world of sin and wickedness. While the Christians believe that Jesus was this Messiah and call him 'Christ', the Jews believe the Messiah has not yet come. Judaism paved the way for the later monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam.

Hebrew Scriptures—The sacred books of Judaism form the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. These books contain the history of the Jews and lay down the religious laws and ethics which they must follow. They also contain myths, legends and works of poetry as well as facts on medicine and astronomy. These works are considered sacred both by the Jews and the Christians.

Christianity

The founder of the Christian religion

was a Jew named Jesus, born at Bethlehem near Jerusalem. The name of his mother was Mary. Not much is known of Jesus till he was about 30 years of age. It was then that he went about preaching his message in simple words and in the form of stories that the common man could understand. He also came to be known as a great healer. His simple life, magnetic personality and outstanding love and compassion for all drew large numbers of people around him.

Jesus was fearless in criticizing the actions he considered evil and this created enemies among the rich and influential people. Some of these complained to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Palestine, that Jesus called himself King of the Jews and was thus inciting them to rebel against the Roman rulers. He was then arrested and sentenced to death on a cross. This explains why the cross came to be a sacred symbol for Christians. They believe that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after crucifixion. This is known as the *Resurrection*, and Easter is celebrated every year in memory of that event. *Good Friday* is the day on which Jesus is believed to have been crucified. After Resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples and other people for forty days and finally ascended to heaven. *Christmas* celebrates his birth.

The Christian era starts with A.D. 1, which, according to tradition, is the year of Jesus's birth. 'A.D.', or *Anno Domini* means 'in the year of the Lord'. In truth, the exact date of Jesus's birth is not known and scholars think that he was born either some years before A.D. 1 or some years after. However, 'B.C.', which means 'Before Christ', has come to be commonly used in designating dates before Jesus's birth.

Jesus very often spoke of the Kingdom of God by which he meant that the authority of God was the supreme power on earth. He said that the Kingdom of God was at hand and could be built up by man, purified by love of God and complete faith in Him. He referred to God as Father and called himself 'Son of God'. He loved his fellow men and taught people to love their neighbours.

According to Christian teachings, Jesus Christ was born on earth to serve God's purpose, and lived and died a painful death to redeem man from sin. The Christians believe that Jesus lived after death and, therefore, held out hope to man, who can always repent, seek God's grace and be saved.

The simple teachings of Jesus entered the people's hearts and infused into them faith and courage. Gradually, Christianity gained strength in Rome where the Bishop of St. Peter's Church came to be looked upon as Jesus Christ's representative on earth and was called the 'Pope' or 'Father'. The Roman emperor, Constantine, is said to have embraced Christianity. By the end of the 4th century, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire. The Christian Church by this time had begun to be organized on hierarchical lines.

The Bible

The holy book of Christianity is the Bible, which means 'the Book'. The Bible has two parts: the 'Old Testment', which is the history of the religious beliefs of the Jews, and the 'New Testament', which contains the biography and teachings of Jesus Christ. The 'Old Testament' was originally written in Hebrew, the language of the Jews, and later translated into Greek. The English version of the Bible in

common use now was prepared in the early 17th century under the royal command of the English King James I.

It is not possible to say precisely when the ancient period of human history came to an end. Very broadly one can say that during the second half of the first millenium A.D., important changes began to take place in the social and economic life of many areas of the world. These changes were so far-reaching that they can be said to have marked the beginning of a new era in history. However, these changes were neither similar nor was their pace the same all over the world. In some areas, the changes were very marked and were accompanied by serious political convulsions.

You have seen how the Roman empire in the west was destroyed as a result of barbarian invasions. The slave system which had been a major feature of the Roman civilization also disappeared. In some other areas, the changes that occurred did not mark as sharp a break with the past as was the case with the Roman civilization. However, whatever the nature and pace of changes, the social, economic and political systems that began to emerge after roughly A.D. 500 were very different from those in the preceding period. You will read about some of these in Chapter 5.

In some areas, the achievements of ancient civilizations formed the basis of further developments. In others, as in western Eurpoe, the achievements of Greek and Roman civilizations were forgotten, to be discovered after about a thousand years. In the following period, many new centres of civilization developed. Some of the achievements of the ancient civilizations were incorporated in the cultures of these new centres of civilization and from there passed on to other areas.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Describe the importance of iron in the growth of civilization.
2. Name the civilization to which each of the following leaders belonged and mention one or more of his special identifying achievements:
   Pericles, Julius Caesar, Emperor of Chin, Cleisthenes, Confucius, Chandragupta I, Augustus, Asoka, Marcus Aurelius, Harsh, Solon, Darius I, Adarshar, Zarathustra.
3. Give the name of the person and/or civilization responsible for the cultural advances as reflected in the following works of literature and art and describe them briefly:
   Atharvaveda, *Iliad*, Ajanta, Acropolis, Parthenon, *Upanishads*, *Aeneid*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Panchatantra*, *Dharma Sastras*, *The Republic*, Hermes and Dionysus, *Meditations*, Pantheon, *Avesta-e-Zend*.
4. Cite evidences or examples of the Romans' contributions to law and government. What special achievement in government should be credited to the Greeks? What achievement to the Han emperors?
5. Describe the contributions of the Iranian civilization in the field of art and architecture.

6. What are the evidences— specific objects, places and/or individuals— that people in the ancient civilizations were beginning more and more to replace superstitions about nature, health and disease with more knowledge of science?
7. Explain the meaning of the following terms:
   Hellenes, tyrant, demos, democracy, oligarchy, republic, lyric, patrician, plebeian, monarchy, matriarchy, patriarchy, *Pax Romana*, *shrenis*, *sudras*, *seismology*, *mandarin*.

Things to do

1. Make a list of the peoples who invaded India between 1500 B.C. and A.D. 600. Explain how these invasions influenced India's culture.
2. Prepare an outline map of Europe, Asia and North Africa. Locate on it the principal cities of ancient times and show how products and ideas may have travelled from East to West and West to East.
3. Write a 500-word paper under one of the following titles:
   The Progress of Man from 1200 B.C. to A.D. 600 or
   The Ancient Peoples, Their Ideas, Discoveries and Inventions (include both those developed by them and those adapted from others).

Things to think about and discuss

1. Compare the religions of the Iranians, Greeks, Romans, Indians and Chinese of ancient times. Discuss the common points in these religions and Judaism and Christainity.
2. Review the class divisions that existed in the societies of the five civilizations. What differences and similarities do you note?
3. Assuming that the following pairs of people could have met each other, what mutually interesting topic do you think they would discuss?

Plato and Confucius	Charaka and Hippocrates
Ssu-ma Chien and Herodotus	Kalidasa and Horace
The Buddha and Spartacus	Ashvaghosha and Aeschylus

4. Discuss the impact of migrations on the growth of each of the five civilizations. What were the different ways in which these civilizations influenced one another?

CHAPTER 4

Early American and African Civilizations

MANY cultures and civilizations arose in Africa and the Americas alongside those that developed in Asia and Europe. Many of these grew into big empires and developed many unique features of their own.

Our knowledge of the early civilizations of the Americas and Africa has suffered owing to ignorance and misconceptions. Until about the end of the 15th century, the very existence of the American continent was unknown to the rest of the world. The Europeans who discovered and conquered the Americas also destroyed the civilizations that had grown there over a period of centuries. Their history and achievements began to be discovered later.

Our knowledge of early African cultures and civilization has suffered much more from ignorance and, more importantly, from misconceptions. You are familiar with certain aspects of the history of some areas of North Africa as it was closely related to the history of Asia and Europe in ancient and medieval times. However, little was known, until recently, of the remaining areas of the vast continent of Africa— of the sub-Saharan Africa, or what is sometimes called Black Africa. And whatever was thought to be known was based on misconceptions. The sub-Saharan Africa began to be explored by the Europeans in the 15th century. This process of exploration was accompanied by slave trade; millions of the Africans were enslaved. They were uprooted from their homes and taken by the European slave traders to work on plantations in the Americas. By the end of the 19th century, after the slave trade had finally come to an end, most part of Africa had been conquered by various European powers. About this you will read in a sub-sequent Chapter. It may be noted here that the process of exploration, slave trade and conquest not only shattered the life of the peoples of the whole continent, but also produced many misconceptions about the history of the African peoples. The cultures of African people were described as primitive awaiting the coming of the European 'civilizers' to bring them the benefits of civilization, even to teach

them such simple things as settled life. It will take a long time before our knowledge of African cultures and civilizations is adequate. The story given here is sketchy covering only a few aspects and a few areas.

EARLY AMERICAN CIVILIZATIONS

Unitl only a few decades ago, it was believed that the history of the civilizations in the Americas did not go very far back into the ancient times. The well-known remains of the civilizations in Central and South America, it was believed, belonged to a period much later than the early civilizations of Asia, North Africa and Europe. The position in regard to the appearance of man in America was the same. It was believed that man arrived in this part of the world very late. Now we know that man had definitely arrived in the Americas, probably from Siberia, before 10,000 B.C. and that the well-known civilizations, some of which were flourishing in Central and South America in the 16th Century, had a long history behind them. Some scholars believe that man had migrated to the Americas more than 20,000 years ago.

We also now know that from as early as 2500 B.C. to the first centuries of the Christian era, a number of cultures were in existence which left their impact on the civilizations that eventually grew into big empires. The more famous of these civilizations are those of the Mayas and the Aztecs in Central America and of the Incas in the Andes in South America. However, there were a number of other cultures in Mexico, which deeply influenced the later cultures. In fact, the Mayas imbibed a number of traits of the earlier cultures during the formative period of their civilization.

Early Cultures

Of the early cultures, the more important are those of the Olmecs in the highlands of Vera Cruz and Tabasco, the Zapotecs and the Mixtecs in Monte Alban and Puebla, and the Totonacs in Central Vera Cruz. These cultures were characterized by certain common features such as monumental architecture, a knowledge of calendar and prevalence of complex religious rituals. Cultivation of maize as the chief crop was the basis of these cultures. The later Central American cultures were also marked by these features. The more prominent of the early cultures in South America was the Chavin culture which flourished in the northern highlands of Peru. The Chavin culture came to an end in about 300 B.C. and was succeeded by the Mochica culture on the north coast of Peru, Paracas and Nazca cultures on the south coast of Peru and Tiahuanaco culture in the Bolivian plateau.

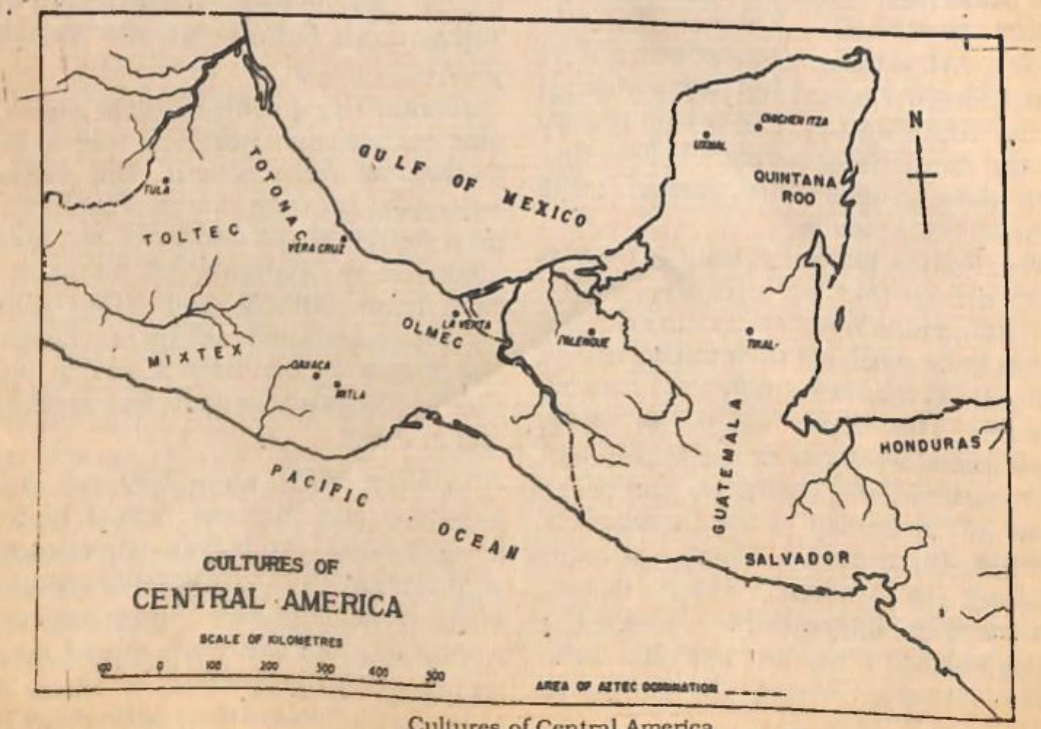
Behind the growth of these cultures and civilizations, however, was a long history of development. The earliest remains in the form of tools of prehistoric man found in the Americas are about 10,000 to 12,000 years old. The tools of early man— skilfully made stone-points used as spearheads, scrapers, choppers and knives— have been found in open sites or places where game was available, and in caves.

Between 5000 and 2500 B.C., man became a food-producer, that is, he took to agriculture. From 2500 B.C. onwards, we find many cultures in a fairly advanced stage, practising the cultivation of a number of crops like maize, gourd, potato and beans. In later cultures, maize not only was the basis of their agriculture but

was significant even in religion. An interesting fact about these cultures is that even though they were practising agriculture, they had not yet learned the domestication of animals. The only exceptions to this are the cultures of the Central Andean region. But even they had tamed only two animals—the llama, an animal resembling the camel though humpless and smaller, and the alpaca, a species of the llama having long, fine hair—which were used only as pack animals and for their wool. The use of the plough and wheel also was not known to them and their tools were made entirely of stone. In fact, stone tools continued to be used for a very long time and even the monumental architecture and the beautifully carved sculptures of the great American civilizations were made with stone tools. When the use of metals began, it was mainly for making ornaments. However, they showed great skill in crafts such as pottery-making, weaving, feather mosaic and lapidary work.

The gradual increase in the role and importance of religion can be seen in the monuments of these cultures. These monuments were connected with the propitiation of gods and offering of sacrifice. Systems of astronomy and writing also evolved in this period. This formative period of Central American cultures began in about 2500 B.C. and continued up to the beginning of the Christian era. This period also saw the gradual evolution of tribes into states in Central America.

The early cultures laid the foundations of the civilizations that arose in the Americas. You will read of three famous American civilizations in this Chapter—those of the Mayas, the Aztecs and the Incas.

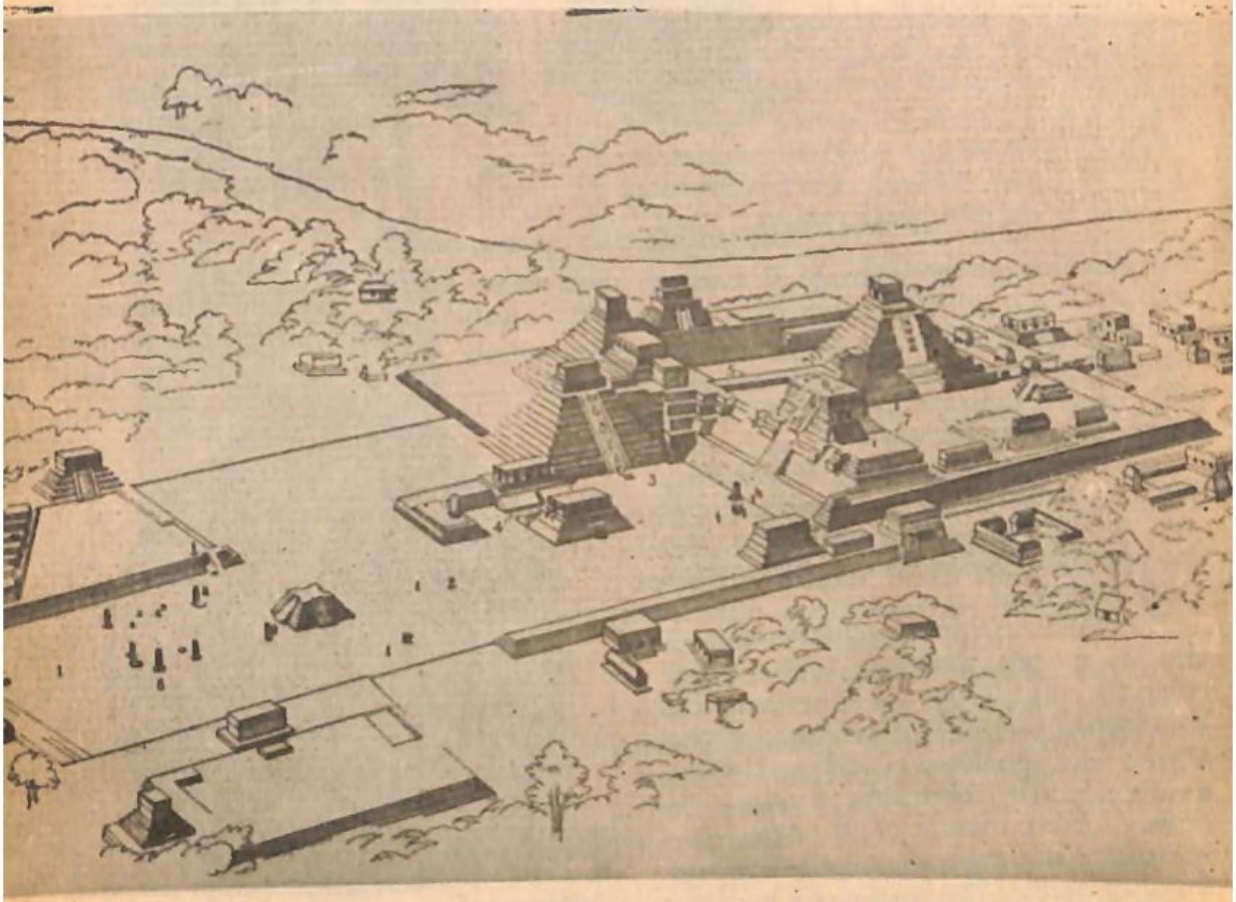


Cultures of Central America

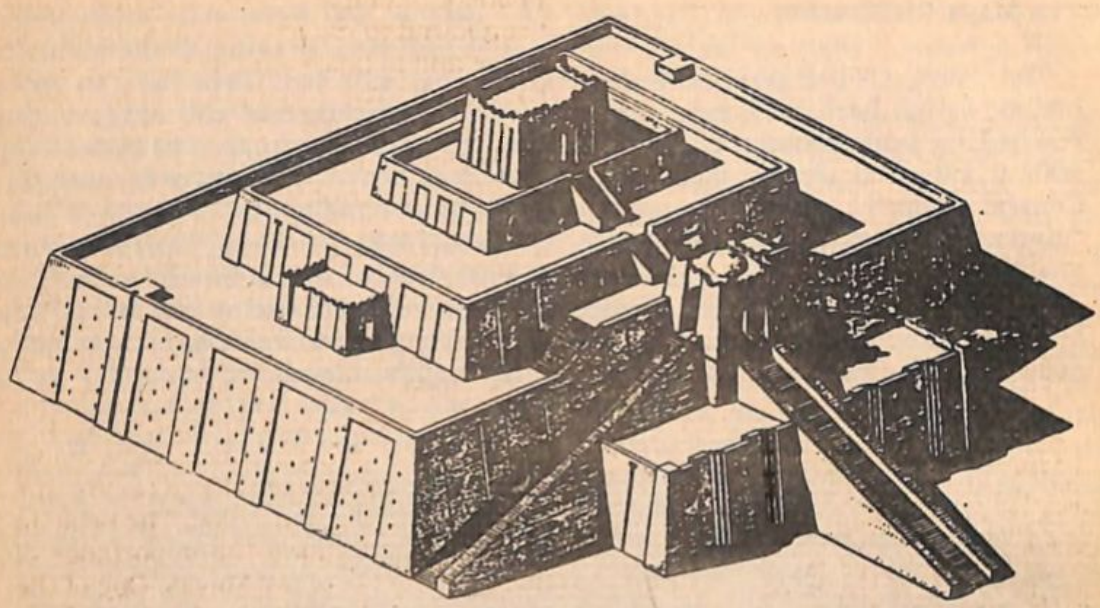
The Maya Civilization

The Maya civilization which has a history dating back to about 1500 B.C. reached its peak between A.D. 300 and 900. It extended over a large area of Central America, covering parts of Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras and Yucatan.

The remains of this mighty civilization have been found at a number of sites. Some of the famous sites are Tikal, Palenque and Bonampak in Guatemala and Copan in Honduras. Later, in the 10th century, Chichen Itza in Yucatan became the main centre of the Maya culture. These sites may properly be called temple cities or ceremonial centres because of the kinds of remains that have been found there. These structures, some of which are massive, were also profusely adorned with stone sculpture and stucco and at times with paintings as well. One of the buildings at Copan has been identified as an



4.1 A view of the magnificent pyramids, temples and other buildings at Copan



4.2 Reconstructed view of a Maya temple at Palenque

astronomical observatory. At Copan as well as at a number of other sites have been found stone stelae or slabs with hieroglyphs carved on them. These stelae give us an accurate idea of the period when they were installed.

These structures of the Mayas were built of stone, which was quarried, shaped and sculptured with stone celts. Lime mortar was used in the construction of these buildings.

The most important achievements of the Maya civilization are their perfect calendar, knowledge of mathematics, hieroglyphic writing and use of paper. The Mayan year consisted of 365 days, as in a solar calendar. There were 18 months in a year, each month of 20 days. The remaining five days were considered an unlucky period. You may recall that the Egyptian calendar consisted of 12 months of 30 days each, with the remaining five days meant for festivals. The Mayas also had a symbol for zero. The Mayan script was partly ideographic and partly

4.3 The picture (at the centre) shows a man with a ball. Around the human figure are signs which indicate measurements of time in the Mayan calender.

4.4 Mayan sculpture from Quirigua near Copan

phonetic. Examples of Mayan writing have been found in carved inscriptions on the stelae and in books, known as codices, of bark-cloth. The codices recorded events connected with the rulers and astronomical information.

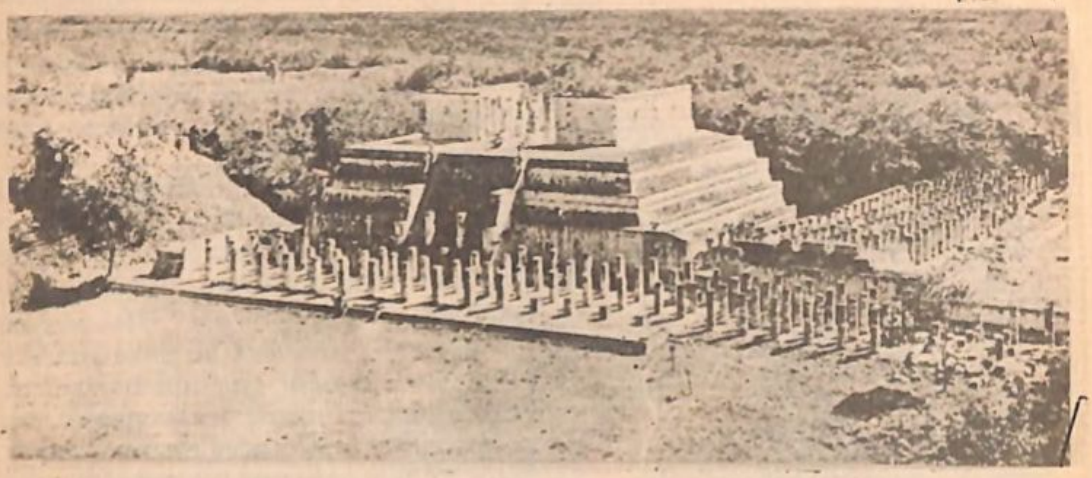
Religious rites and rituals played a very important part in the life of the Mayas. It is likely that the calendar was developed to meet the requirements of these religious performances. The Mayas worshipped a number of gods and the priest held a high position in society. Sacrifices were made to propitiate the gods. Even human sacrifices were made. Some of their gods were the god of fire, the rain-god and the maize-god. The belief in the maize-god shows the importance of maize in the life of the Mayas. One of the interesting religious rituals was a ball-game played with a rubber ball.

Even though a large number of Maya cities have been found, none of these seems to have been the centre or the capital of the civilization. It appears that the Maya civilization consisted of a number of city-states which were bound together by common language, culture and religion.

The basis of Mayan economy was agriculture. The main item of diet was maize along with beans, potato, papaya, squash and chilli. Bountiful maize crop was what the Maya was after and he propitiated the gods to get it.

The common people lived in settlements near their corn fields. They wore dresses made of cotton cloth. The Mayas knew how to dye cloth. The pottery was made by the coil method as the potter's wheel was not known.

Around A.D. 900, new groups of people poured into the valley of Mexico. The most important and powerful of these were the



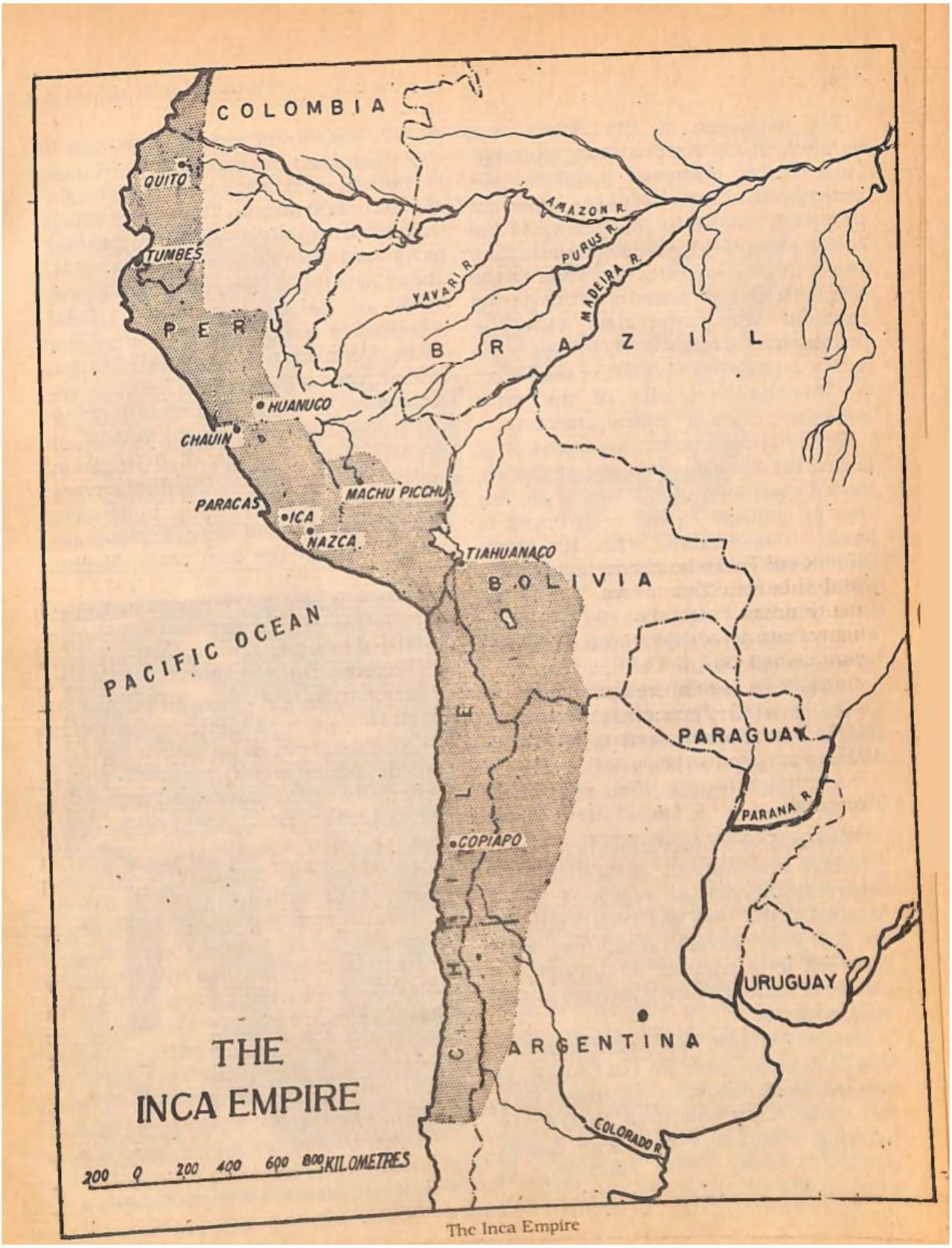
4.5 The Temple of the Warriors' built by Toltecs at Chichen Itza

Toltecs of Tula who overran Teotihuacan and subjugated the Maya civilization in many areas. They, however, continued many features of the civilization they had vanquished, such as the monumental architecture, sculpture and the rituals of the Mayas. They extended their empire in Mexico and the southern parts of Central America. They also began using metals. In the 12th century, however, they too receded into the background and the Aztecs emerged on the scene. The Mayas by this time had been pushed to the Yucatan peninsula and when the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century, the Mayas were in possession of only a part of Yucatan.

The Aztecs

The Aztecs, also known as the Tenochas, emerged as a tribe in about A.D. 1200. In the next two centuries they became the overlords of Mexico with their twin capitals at Tenochtitlan and Tlateloco which they founded in A.D. 1325. The Aztecs built a mighty empire which covered an area of about 200,000 square kilometres. The empire was divided into 38 provinces, each ruled by a governor, assisted by a garrison and a group of tax collectors. The Aztecs were mainly a warrior tribe. Their king, who was also their chief priest, was elected by a council of nobles, priests and warriors. They worshipped a number of gods like the sun-god and the corn-goddess who was considered the Mother of the Gods. One of the Toltec gods was adopted by them and was worshipped as the god of learning and priesthood.

The huge empire of the Aztecs was supported by the taxes collected from the tribes subjugated by them. Their *Chinampas* or floating gardens are a famous innovation. They had learned the technique of smelting and working of soft metals but they made only simple tools. Their pottery shows a wide range of variety and the crafts of featherwork and cotton-weaving a very high standard. Their craftsmen excelled in gold work and in the use of semi-precious stones such as jade and turquoise



The Inca Empire

The language of the Aztecs was Nahuatl, which is still a living language. Their writing, preserved in codices, was pictographic. Their codices are important records of events in the history of the Aztecs and provide valuable information about them. The year, according to the Aztec calendar, consisted of 260 days. The calendar was connected with the performance of religious ceremonies. The Aztecs' capital, Tenochtitlan, or the 'Palace of Tenocha' was one of the most impressive cities of Central America.

Bernard Diaz, who accompanied Cortes during the Spanish conquest of Mexico, has left a very interesting record about this city. In contrast to the drab towns of Spain, Tenochtitlan, with its green gardens and white buildings, appeared a paradise to him. Diaz wrote, "Gazing on such wonderful sights we did not know what to say or whether what appeared before us was real.... "

In 1519 the Spanish conquerors led by Cortes entered Tenochtitlan and the mighty Aztec empire came to an end in 1521.

The Incas

The Incas were the creators of the most powerful and famous civilization that throve in the Andean region of South America in the 14th and 15th centuries. As you have already read, they were preceded by a number of cultures the history of some of which goes back to very ancient times.

The Inca empire was stretched over a very extensive area in the Andes in western South America– in Ecuador, Peru and Chile. This vast area, marked by towering mountains and deep valleys stretched nearly 5,000 kilometres in length along the coast. The Inca empire was the biggest empire in the Americas. It was ruled from the capital city of Cuzco in south-central Peru situated at a height of about 3500 metres. The empire which was dotted with cities was divided into four parts, each of which was ruled by a noble. The cities of the Incas had huge structures such as palaces, temples, official storehouses and fortresses. There was a network of roads which connected Cuzco with all parts of the empire. The Incas are famous for their engineering skill. Their structures, built of stone blocks without the use of any mortar, their irrigation system and improved methods of terrace cultivation, their bridges built over canyons and their immense fortresses are unique. One of the Inca cities, Machu

4.6 Part of a building constructed of blocks of granite at Machu Picchu

4.7 Painted pottery of the Incas

Picchu in south-central Peru, situated at a height of nearly 3500 metres, was a fortress city with houses, temples and palaces connected with one another by stone staircases. The houses of peasants and ordinary citizens were made of sun-dried brick or stones plastered with mud.

The emperor of the Incas was regarded as the descendant of the sun. After the emperor came the nobles and the priests in social hierarchy. Cultivators and craftsmen were the common people. The land was owned by the state and was distributed to the cultivators according to the size of the family. The state maintained large granaries, which supported the nobility, the priests and the officials. If a crop failed, food was doled out to the people from these granaries.

Cultivation was done in terrace fields in the rugged mountains. Maize, potato and sweet potato were the main agricultural products. Arts and crafts were also highly developed, particularly pottery-making, cotton-weaving and wool from the llama and the alpaca. The Peruvian textiles of the Inca period made on loom by women had a variety of designs and they show a high level of attainment. The pottery, made without the potter's wheel, was of various types and shapes and was decorated with beautiful designs. The Incas made bronze tools and weapons and prepared beautiful ornaments of gold, silver and copper. They did not have a writing system and kept their records with a device called *quipu* which was a kind of aid to remember things. It was a stick on which knotted strings of different colours were tied in a series. A number of skulls have been dicovered, which show that medicine and surgery were highly developed.

In 1532, the Spanish conquerors under Fransisco Pizzaro entered this area and during the next two years over-ran the entire empire. The last Inca emperor was captured and executed. Gold ornaments of

4.8 Inca pottery shaped into seated human figures

the Incas were looted and melted down into bars. Not a piece of gold ornaments which had been worked by the Inca craftsmen laboriously was sent to Spain intact.

4.9 Rectangular gold plate embossed with the figure of a priest.

By the middle of the 16th century, the early civilizations of the Americas had come to an end. They were destroyed by the invaders who accompanied or followed the explorers from Europe. In the course of the following centuries, when more and more people from Europe settled there the cultures of the indigenous peoples of the Americas were destroyed. Besides the mighty civilizations mentioned in this Chapter, there were many other cultures, communities of hunters and farmers. These people were displaced from their lands and hunting places and many were exterminated. While the advanced civilizations have left behind their monuments, very little trace has been left of others. In certain areas where once communities of farmers and hunters lived, one does not find any trace of the original inhabitants. In other areas the conquerors intermixed with the indigenous population and certain aspects of the old culture survived.

In some countries, particularly in Central and South America, the indigenous people who, thanks to Columbus, came to be known as Indians, constitute a substantial proportion of their population. From the 16th century, a very different kind of civilization began to emerge as a result of the activities of European colonizers and settlers. Within a few centuries, the entire continent had changed beyond recognition.

With the growth of the popular movements in Central and South America, the original inhabitants of the Americas, suppressed for centuries, are winning their rights as equals of the descendants of European settlers. The people, the original inhabitants and descendants of European settlers, of the countries in which the civilization mentioned in this Chapter flourished, look

at their past achievements with pride. When Mexico became a republic, the symbol of the Aztec deity was adopted as the official emblem of the country. The language of the Incas, Quichua, is the second official language of Peru. Many achievements of the peoples of the Americas before the European conquest have become invaluable acquisitions of the entire mankind. Some of the agricultural and forest products which were not known to the world outside the Americas and which are now used all over the world are maize (corn), potato, tomato, squash, pumpkin, pineapple, strawberry and tobacco.

EARLY AFRICAN CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS

The Europeans penetrated into the African continent later than elsewhere and they called it the Dark Continent. The first Europeans to go to Africa and write about it were the Portuguese and many of them referred to the existence of powerful states and civilizations. These accounts were, however, ignored when the European conquest of Africa was completed in the 19th century. The Europeans began to believe that because of their geographical isolation, the African people never evolved from a primitive stage until the Europeans came there. Civilizing the Africans and raising them from their sub-human to the human level became one of the constant refrains of the colonial rulers. Another misconception was that in no part of tropical Africa were there established societies and developed political and economic institutions and activities. The Europeans, therefore, claimed that it was during the period of colonial rule that Africans came to learn the art of settled life and be engaged in agriculture, commerce and industries.

Recent discoveries about Africa's past have demolished these notions about the historical backwardness of the African peoples. These discoveries are the result of different sources. One important source is archaeology. In various parts of Africa, archaeologists have excavated old sites and the findings of these excavations help us to reconstruct Africa's past from the Stone Age to the present period. The task of reconstruction has been greatly helped by the historical traditions orally described by tribal and village elders. Moreover, the records left behind by the early travellers and traders help us to corroborate the oral traditions and archaeological discoveries and give many other facts and information. We have a large number of records left by the Arab travellers, traders and scholars from the 7th century onwards about many parts of Africa. From the 15th century onwards there are the accounts of many European travellers and traders beginning with the Portuguese.

The People of Africa

The people of Africa are formed of three great families belonging to the three main groups of languages spoken in Africa. First, there are people speaking *Sudanic* languages, inhabiting throughout the vast territory of the Sudan, lying between the Sahara and the equator beginning from the mouth of River Senegal down to the upper Guinea coast right up to the borders of Ethiopia in the east. Secondly, there are people speaking Bantu languages, inhabiting almost the entire southern half of the continent, south of Sudan. Thirdly there are people speaking *Semitic* and *Hamitic* languages, inhabiting the territories lying to the north and north-east of Sudan and including Ethiopia.

Somalia and a part of Kenya. These peoples intermixed with one another throughout the thousands of years of their history. You have already read about the civilizations of some of the people belonging to the third group, particularly the Egyptians. In this Chapter you will read about some cultures and civilizations of the Sudanic peoples and the Bantu peoples. The history of some Semitic-Hamitic people of some parts of north-east Africa also will be briefly mentioned.

It may be remembered here that though some areas of African hinterland were relatively isolated from the rest of the world, other areas, particularly on the coast, had a long history of contacts with many other parts of the world. Two great world religions influenced the culture of many parts of Africa from very early days. Christianity spread to north-east Africa during the early centuries of the Christian era. The spread of Islam started early in the 8th century and continued up to the 16th century. Many parts of Africa also had trade with many distant areas of the world from very early times.

From Old Stone Age to the Beginning of Iron Age

You have read in Chapter 1 about the various species of early man. One of them Zinjanthropus, who was the first tool-maker, lived in northern Tanzania about a million years ago. Many scholars believe that Africa was the home of the first *Homo sapiens* also and was thus the cradle of humanity.

The food-producing stage began about 7000 years ago in the lower Nile valley. In areas south of the Sahara, the food-producing stage began about 5000 years ago and gradually spread to various parts of southern Africa. However, because of

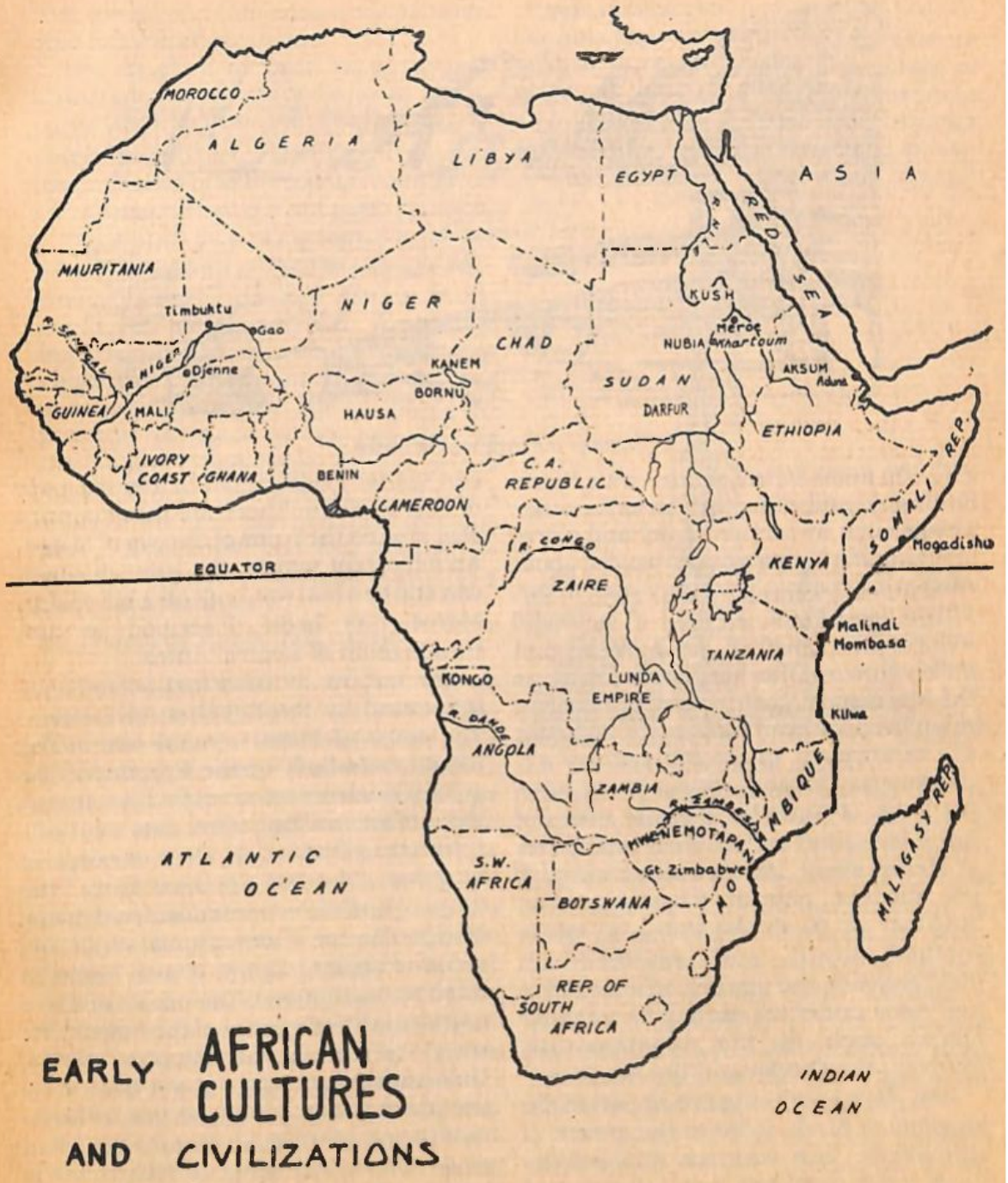
4.10 Old African furnace for smelting iron ore

certain geographical factors, it took a long time for a large part of Africa to take to agriculture. The soil in large parts of Africa is not very fertile and requires digging unlike the river valleys you read about in Chapter 2. The land also needed to be cleared of jungles. Therefore, until the use of iron began most African areas remained either at the food-gathering or at the cattle-breeding stage.

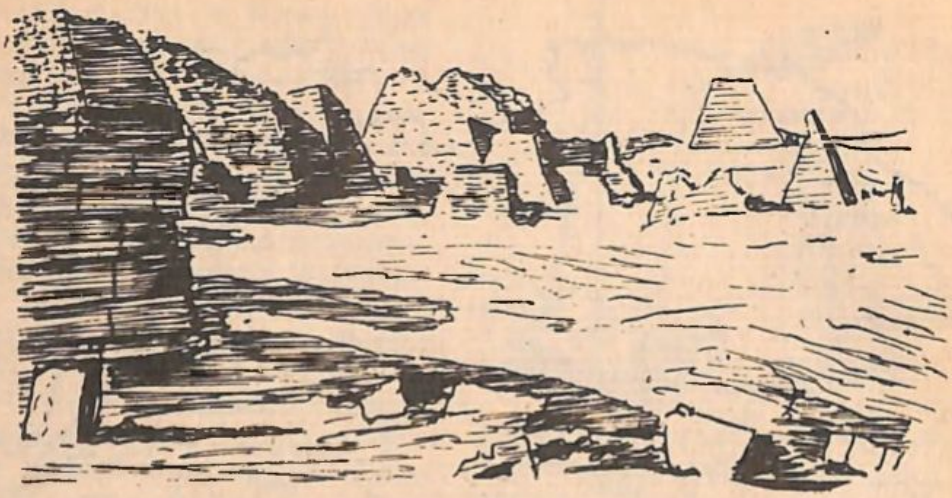
About 2000 years ago, the various processes of iron metallurgy– extraction, smelting and forging– began to be known in Africa and spread rapidly to many areas. The use of iron implements made the spread of cultivation of land possible. And the spread of agriculture led to the emergence of civilization. The knowledge of iron metallurgy perhaps came from Egypt during the first millenium B.C. The period from the beginning of the Christian era to about A.D. 1200 is very important in the history of Africa. It was during this period that iron metallurgy spread to many parts of Africa and laid the foundation of the growth of civilization there.

Kingdom of Kush

The Egyptian civilization of which you have read before had trade connections



Early African Cultures and Civilizations



4.11 Ruins of the pyramids at Meroe

with the areas to the south—with Nubia for its gold and with other areas for other things such as incense, ivory and skins. It is said that Nubia's mines yielded about 40,000 kilograms of gold every year. In this region south of Egypt, a powerful independent kingdom arose in the first millennium B.C. This kingdom is known as the kingdom of Kush, in modern Sudan. It survived for over 1000 years till about 4th century A.D. In the 8th century B.C. this kingdom became a major power when the kings of Kush became the rulers of Egypt for a short period. Their capital was at Meroe, about 160 kilometres north of the modern city of Khartoum. The kingdom of Kush expanded to areas further south and retained its independence and power long after Egypt had come under the occupation of other powers such as the Assyrians, the Iranians, the Greeks and the Romans.

Iron played a very important part in the kingdom of Kush. It led to the growth of agriculture. Iron weapons enabled the Kush kings to launch wars of conquest and led to the expansion of the kingdom into parts of the Sudan. To this day one can see the evidence of the immense use of iron in Kush. There are mountains of slag around the ruins of the city of Meroe. An important temple, the ruins of which can still be seen, was built on a hill of slag. Meroe has been described as the Birmingham of Central Africa.

The culture of Kush had been deeply influenced by the Egyptian civilization. The ruins of Meroe remind one of the monuments built by the Egyptians. The gods of Kush are more or less the same as those of ancient Egyptians. One also finds Egyptian influence in their concept of kingship. Like the Egyptian kings, the kings of Kush also were considered divine beings. The use of hieroglyphic script, the script of ancient Egypt, is also found in Kush in inscriptions. The people of Kush had also evolved a script of their own. This script is called the Meroitic script. Unfortunately, it has not yet been fully deciphered. It may interest you to know that the people of Kush seem to have had trade relation with India as Indian cloth is known to have been used there. From a sculpture showing a king seated on an elephant, some scholars have concluded

that the art and ceremonies of Kush were also influenced by India.

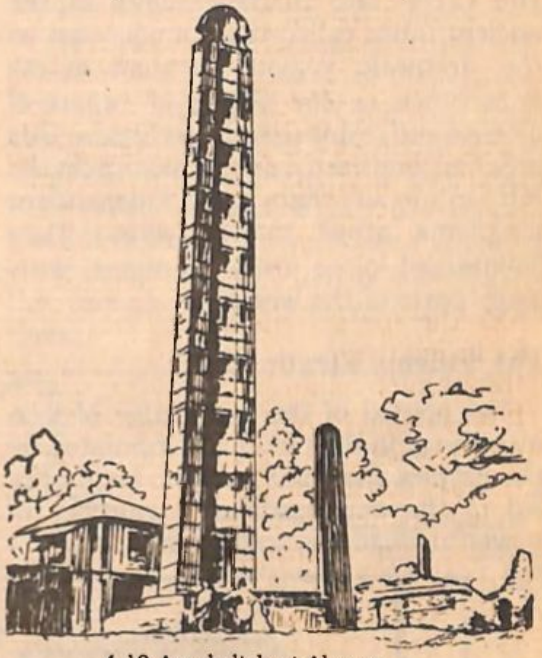
The kingdom of Kush played a very important role in the history of Africa, particularly in the central and western parts. Its greatest contribution was the dissemination of knowledge of making iron and its uses to many other parts of Africa.

The decline of the kingdom of Kush led to the emergence of two new kingdoms—Nubia in the north and Aksum in the south. In about A.D. 300, Aksum, in modern Ethiopia, vanquished the kingdom of Kush and the city of Meroe was destroyed. A historian has compared the kingdom of Kush to the city-state of Athens which had arisen at more or less the same time. Like Athens, Kush was a major centre of art and had trade relations with many lands, and like Athens, its influence spread far and wide long after it had ceased to exist.

Kingdoms of Nubia and Aksum

The kingdoms of Nubia and Aksum arose during the early centuries of the Christian era. As stated above, the state of Aksum destroyed the power of Kush in about A.D. 300 and extended its dominions further south. The rulers of both these kingdoms embraced Christianity in the 4th century A.D. While the rulers of Nubia became Muslims in the 13th century as a result of the growing influence of Arabs, Aksum remained a Christian country. It developed a distinctive culture including a written language called 'Geez'. Trade played an important part in the life of both these kingdoms. The main sea-port of Aksum was at Adulis which for several centuries was the most important centre of East African trade with countries far away, such as India and Greece. Aksum exported ivory, gold dust, raw hides and perfumes to various parts of the world.

Aksum was the more powerful of the two kingdoms. Culturally also it was more important. There was an intermixing of Sudanese, Hamitic and Arab elements in Aksum, which gave the people a distinct identity. After the rise of Islam and growth in the power of the Arabs, Aksum



4.12 An obelisk at Aksum

expanded southwards leading to the formation of the present country of Ethiopia. It is interesting to mention here the Ethiopian legends according to which the kingdom of Sheba mentioned in the Bible was Ethiopia. Perhaps you have heard that the Bible mentions a queen of Sheba who visited King Solomon of Palestine. According to the Ethiopian legends, the kings of ancient Ethiopia were the descendants of the son of the queen of Sheba and King Solomon.

The kings of Aksum built splendid monuments which remind us of the monuments of ancient Egypt. The remains of many palaces, temples, obelisks and forts have been found. The

obelisks have beautiful carved sculptures on them. The people of Aksum had mastered the art of constructing massive structures of stone without the use of mortar.

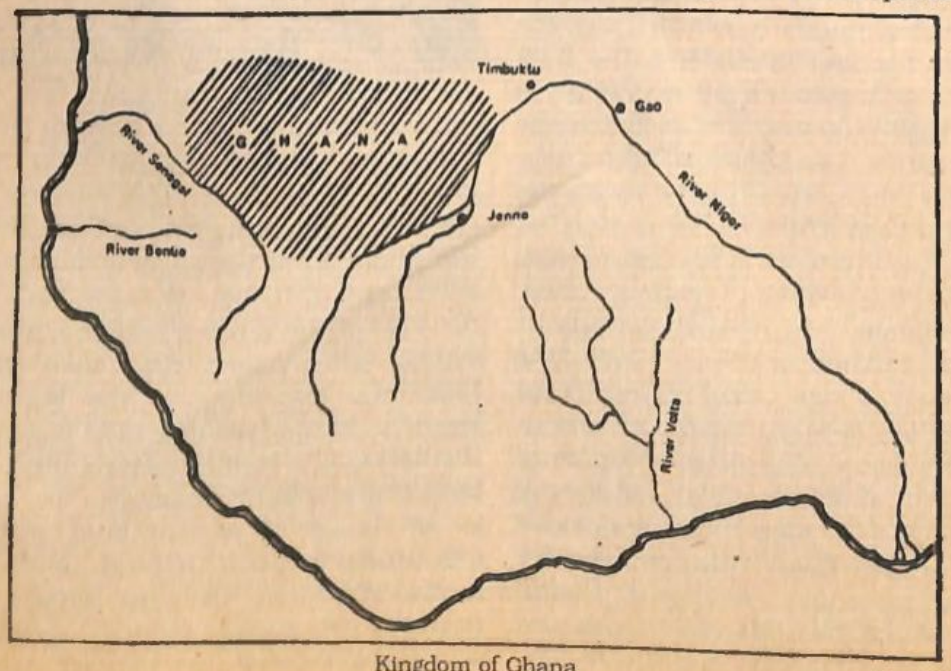
The Somali coast had been an important centre of trade from early times. The Greek and Roman sailors of the ancient times called the Somali coast as the aromatic region because of its importance as the centre of export of incense and resins used in perfumes. This area had long been a part of Aksum. In the 8th century A.D., many small independent kingdoms arose in this area. They maintained close trade contacts with many parts of the world.

The Sudanic Kingdoms

The spread of the knowledge of iron metallurgy in the territories inhabited by the peoples speaking Sudanic languages led to the emergence of a number of powerful kingdoms and empires. Many of these kingdoms were as strong as their contemporary kingdoms in other parts of the world. Various aspects of material life and culture were also highly developed. In many important features, these kingdoms were similar. Because of these similarities one can speak of a Sudanic civilization which comprised the cultures of the various kingdoms formed by the Sudanic peoples.

One of the important features of the Sudanic kingdoms was the similarity in their political institutions. Divine powers were attributed to the rulers of these kingdoms. The administration of these kingdoms was centralized and the government was run with the help of a body of efficient officials who were appointed by the king. The various offices in the state were not hereditary. They organized the collection of taxes and tributes. As trade occupied an important position, the artisans and craftsmen enjoyed a high status in society.

The new religion of Islam spread rapidly

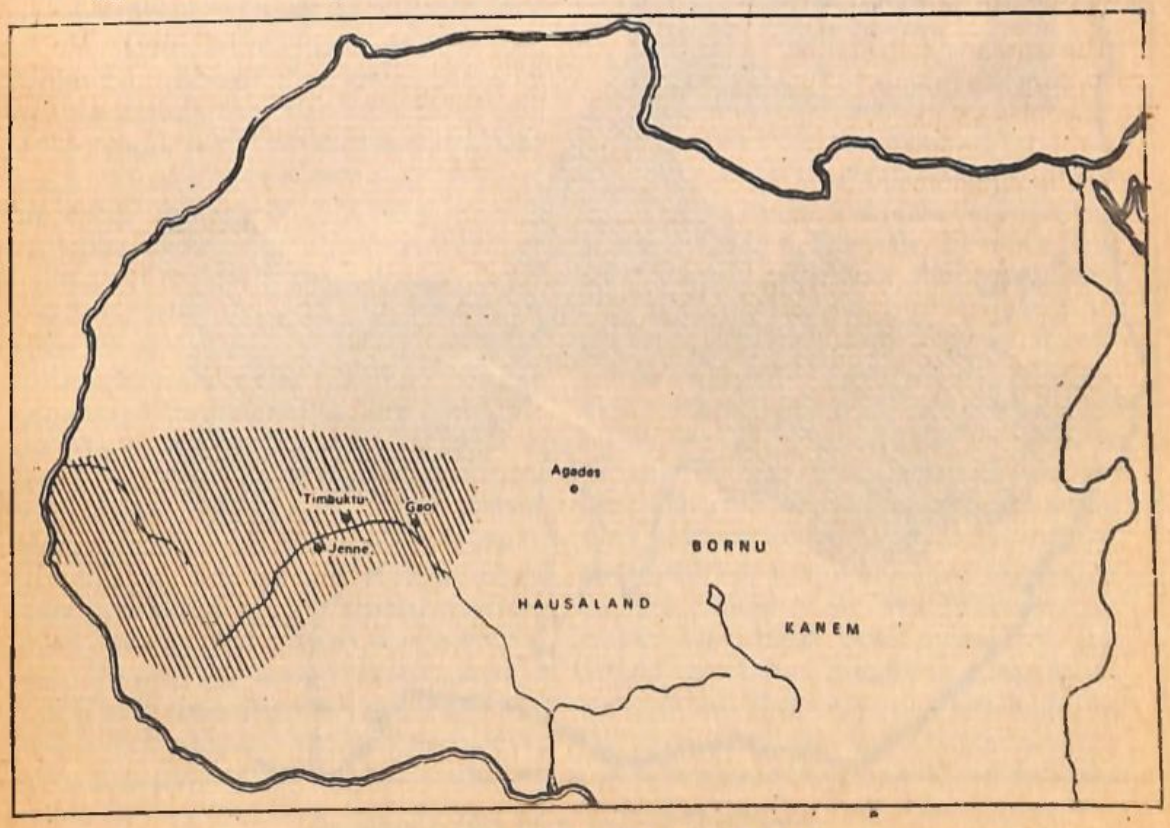


Kingdom of Ghana

in most of these kingdoms during the 10th and 11th centuries and in some others during the 15th and 16th centuries. Religion was thus another major common feature of most of these kingdoms. These kingdoms now also became a part of the Islamic civilization. It helped further in the growth of trade and led to the development of culture. Because of their close contacts with Arabs, we get many accounts of these kingdoms from Arab travellers and scholars.

Some of the major kingdoms and states that arose in Sudan were Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Kanem, Bornu, Hausa states and Darfur.

Ghana– Ghana, in the north-west of the upper course of Niger river was the first state to emerge in West Africa. The beginnings of this state can be traced back to the centuries before the Christian era. The use of iron in agriculture and in the making of weapons enabled Ghana to become a powerful state by the 8th century A.D. To the north of Ghana were areas which were rich in salt deposits and to its south were found gold deposits. Ghana was able to control the areas of gold deposits, and gold became the most important item in Ghana's trade adding to its power and prosperity. The area began to be called 'the land of gold'. The present state of Ghana has been named after this old kingdom. A large part of this state is the former British colony called Gold Coast.



Kingdom of Mali under Kankan Musa

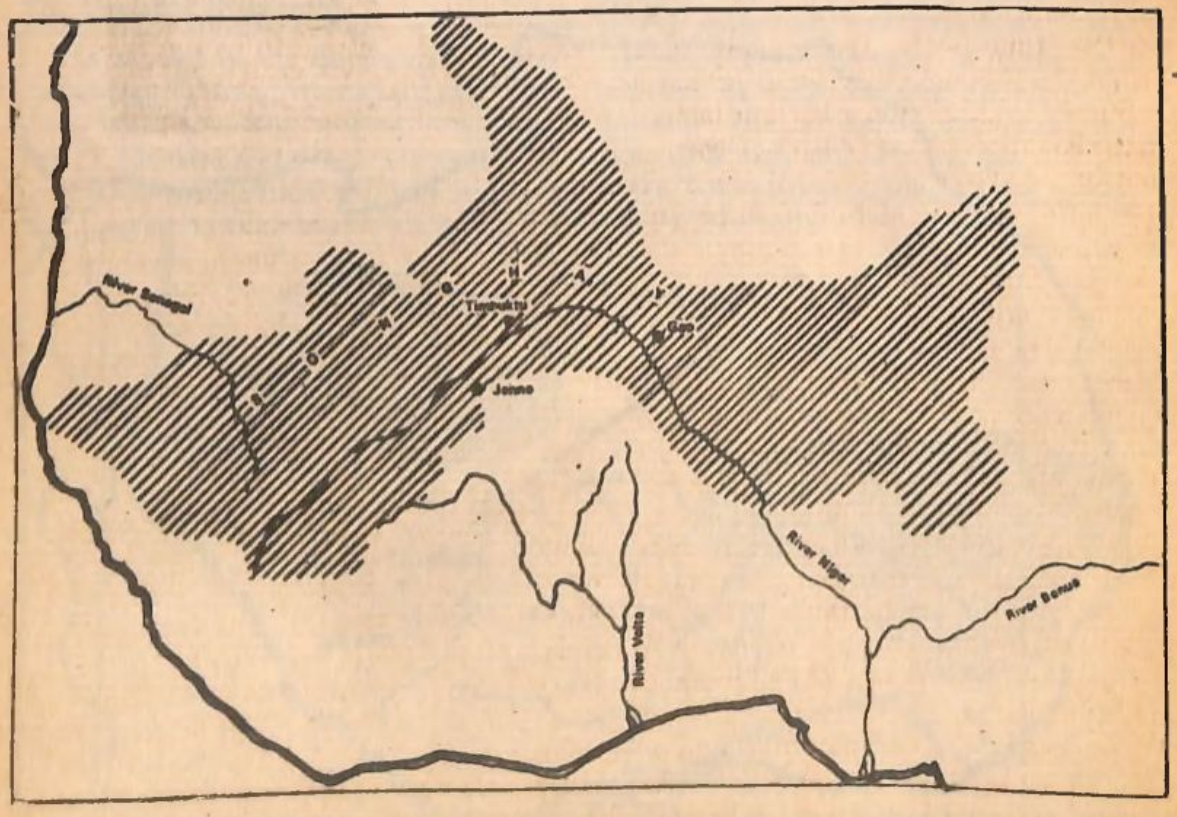
The state of Ghana declined in the 11th and 12th centuries, followed by the rise of a number of kingdoms, the most powerful of which was Mali.

Mali and Songhay—The kingdom of Mali was founded in the 13th century. It soon grew into a big empire covering a large area of western Sudan. Mali kings controlled the sources of gold in the south and the salt deposits in the north. Their power declined in the 15th century but in its place there emerged another kingdom—of Songhay. This kingdom reached its highest power in the 16th century. But by about 1600 it came to an end.

The most famous king of Mali was Mansa (which means 'emperor') Kankan-Musa. He went to Mecca on pilgrimage. The entire Islamic world was amazed at the display of his splendour and pomp. It is said that he had taken so much gold with him that when he passed through Cairo in 1324 the value of gold in Cairo fell. Following his example the famous Songhay ruler Askia Muhammad tried to impress the world by an even more magnificent display when he went on pilgrimage.

The Arab travellers have left many interesting descriptions of these kingdoms and of their wealth and power and the general conditions prevailing there.

Ibn Battuta, the famous Moroccan scholar and traveller who visited India during the reign of Mohammad Tughlaq,



Kingdom of Songhay under Askia Muhammad

toured the Mali kingdom in the middle of the 14th century. He praises the women of Mali for their 'surpassing beauty' and says that they are 'shown more respect than the men'. He refers to the prevalence of matriarchal system in Mali which he had 'seen nowhere else in the world except among the Indians of Malabar'. He was impressed by the security and order prevailing in Mali and praises the people who, according to him, "are seldom unjust, and have a greater horror of injustice than other people.... There is complete security in their country. Neither traveller nor inhabitant in it has anything to fear from robbers or men of violence".

The cities in Mali and Songhay kingdoms became prosperous from trade and commerce. Some of the famous cities of the time were Gao, Jenne and Timbuktu. Though they were primarily centres of trade, they also became famous in the Islamic world as centres of learning and attracted scholars from other parts of the world. The city of Timbuktu became particularly famous for its mosques and as a centre of learning.

Other States of Sudan—A number of powerful states had arisen in Central Sudan also. The largest of these was the kingdom of Kanem between the rivers Nile and Niger. After its decline, the state of Bornu became important in Central Sudan. The kingdom of Bornu which originated in the 8th century continued to exist till the 17th century. It maintained a large army and was particularly famous for its cavalry. The cavalry soldiers wore chain armours or breast-plates made of iron. Their horses also were well protected. Their heads were covered in front and on sides with plates made of brass. Darfur emerged as a major state during the 16th and 17th centuries and survived till the

4.13 An ivory mask from Benin

early decades of the 20th century. Benin was another important state of the people of Upper Guinea. Towards the end of the first millennium A.D., a number of city states of Hausaland had emerged in northern Nigeria. Though these Hausa states were never politically united, they were unique in the central Sudan for their highly developed industries, particularly the manufacture and dyeing of textiles the leatherwork, glassmaking and metal work of many kinds. These states carried on an extensive trade and are important for their influence on the culture of west Africa. Like most other states in the Sudan, the Hausa people had embraced Islam in the 15th century. Their cultural influence and the importance of their trade can be seen from the the fact that their language became the language of communication all over West Africa.

Civilizations of the Bantu Peoples

The African people living south of the equator speak closely related languages belonging to the family of languages known as Bantu (literal meaning 'man'). Powerful states arose in many parts of southern Africa as a result of the growth of agriculture, metal technology and trade. Except for the East African coastal cities and states, the sources of our information about the history of this region are fewer than those for the Sudanic states.

Kingdom of Kongo

In ancient times a number of states had emerged in the area along the coastal region of Angola from the estuary of river Congo to the mouth of river Dande. By the 15th century, these states were united into a large kingdom called the Kingdom of Kongo. When the Portuguese reached this area for the first time, the Kingdom of Kongo was at the height of its power. It had reached a high level of centralized and efficient administration. Though the kings of Kongo were given divine honours and were considered owners of all lands in the kingdom, monarchy was not hereditary. The king was elected from among a number of aristocratic families. His powers were not absolute. There were assemblies of the people which had many powers. The institution of slavery was prevalent but it had many unique features. The slaves were generally prisoners of war, criminals or people who were in debt, but they could not be bought or sold. They remained with the family of the master as members of the family. They could own property. After the 15th century when Portuguese traders came to Kongo, the peace and prosperity of the kingdom was wrecked by their vandalism and treachery.

The Lunda Empire

The Lunda empire which covered a vast area including eastern Angola and Katanga (now a province of the Republic of Zaire) was one of the most powerful states in southern Africa. In this region conditions were ideal for extensive cultivation,fishing and hunting. The area was also very rich in mineral deposits. The people of this region had become technologically advanced from very early times. Many sites have been discovered which prove that as early as 8th and 9th centuries A.D., the copper of Katanga was being mined. The growth of technology and agriculture created conditions for the growth of a powerful state. The name Lunda empire is derived from the language of the region which is called 'Lunda'.

The power of the Lunda empire was based on extensive metal work in iron and copper. The Lunda cities had numerous skilled craftsmen– smiths, weavers, potters, basket-makers, brewers, wood-carvers and traders. The political system of the empire was in some ways similar to that of Kongo, but it had many unique features. As in Kongo, the Lunda empire also had a powerful popular assembly which could even dethrone the king. The matriarchal system had influenced the political institutions of the empire. There were two authorities in the state which governed the empire. These were Mwata Yamvo or the king and Lukokesha which literally means 'mother of all'. Mwata Yamvo was elected from among the sons of the dead king and Lukokesha from among the daughters of the dead king. An elaborate system of manners and ceremonies to be observed by Mwata Yamvo and Lukokesha as well as by others was fixed. Trade played an important part

in the empire. It may be seen from the fact that one of the main duties of the state was to organize and look after trade.

The Kingdom of Mwenemutepa

An Arab traveller of the 10th century referred to the existence of large-scale trade in gold and ivory between Africa's southeastern coast and India and China. This trade originated in the plateau of Zimbabwe where a great civilization had emerged by the 10th century. The Portuguese traders in the 15th century mentioned the fabulous riches of a great and powerful state in this area. The ruler of this state was Mwenemutepa or Monomotapa, as the Portuguese called him. The people of this area which was rich in agriculture, cattlebreeding and gold deposits, had established contacts with the coastal lands for trade purposes. In course of time, perhaps they came to control the coastal cities and were engaged in maritime trade in gold and ivory.

The centre of this civilization was the ancient city of the Great Zimbabwe whose great stone ruins have become famous throughout the world. The stone walls of the city reached a height of 10 metres and a thickness of about 7 metres. On this ancient site was situated the capital of the kingdom of Mwenemutepa which is believed to have flourished between the 13th and the 18th centuries covering a

4.14 Ruins of the wall at Great Zimbabwe

4.15 Ruins of a tower at Great Zimbabwe

wide territory of much of Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe, before it became independent, which, until recently was ruled by a white minority, was called

Southern Rhodesia.

Coastal Regions of East Africa

The eastern coastal region of Bantu Africa had come into contact with outside commerce from very early times. The trading settlements of this area were known to the Greek geographers as early as the 1st century A.D. These areas had trade links with far away countries such as India and China. The major items of trade were gold, ivory and iron. From the 7th century onwards, as a result of contacts with Arab settlers, the old cities became very important centres of trade. Some of the important cities of this period are Kilwa, Mogadishu, Malindi and Mombasa. The people of this area embraced Islam and there was a remarkable increase in the prosperity of the coastal cities. Luxury goods like porcelain were imported from China. The rulers of Kilwa minted their own currency. Trade with India was very important. In fact, India was the most important exporter of goods to these areas as well as the importer of goods from these areas. This area was very rich in mines of iron ore of high concentration. Traders to India brought iron ore, which was used for making swords.

The cultural and trade contacts with the Arabs many of whom had settled down in this area had very deep impact on the culture of this area. This can be seen in the large number of mosques and tombs which were constructed and which can still be seen all along the coast. The most important result of these contacts was the growth of a new language, *Swahili*, which is an Arabic word, meaning 'of the coast'. This language developed as a result of the intermingling of Arabic with the indigenous Bantu language. It is still the common language of a large number of people in East Africa.

Evidence of technological advancement, trade and commerce and formation of states with developed political institutions has been found in many other parts of southern Africa. In the region which today covers southern Uganda, north-west Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and eastern parts of the Republic of Zaire, a number of kingdoms emerged in early times. The territories of many of these kingdoms extended hundreds of miles around their capital towns.

The work done by historians and archaeolgists during recent years has added to our understanding of the growth of civilization in Africa. Even though some parts of Africa were isolated from the outside world, a large part had close trade and cultural relations with many areas of the world. However, the kinds of contacts which began to develop between Africa and the outside world in the 16th century resulted in violent disruption of African societies and their social, political and economic institutions. Slaves in hundreds of thousands were sold in Americas, and in the European and Arab markets. This commerce in human cargo continued for four centuries. By the time the European powers partitioned Africa, Africa's glorious traditions had indeed become a part of the forgotten past.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Describe the important common features of the early American civilization.
2. What were the most important achievements of the Mayas ?
3. Compare the Mayan and the ancient Egyptian calendars.
4. Describe the achievements of the Inca and Aztec civilizations.
5. Why did the food-producing stage in some parts of Africa start later than in some other parts of the world ?
6. In what ways was the civilization of Kush influenced by the ancient Egyptian civilization ? Why is Kush called the Birmingham of Central Africa ?
7. What were the main centres of the Sudanic civilization ?
8. What are the three main families of languages in Africa ? Mention the language group to which the people of the following civilizations belonged : Aksum, Mali, Kongo, Hausa States, Ghana, Mwenemutepa, Bornu. What is meant by Swahili ?
9. When did Islam spread to Africa ? What was its influence on the African civilizations ?
10. Describe the importance of iron in the growth of civilizations in Africa.

Things to do

1. On a map of modern Central and South America, indicate the country/countries where the civilizations of the Incas, the Mayas and the Aztecs flourished.
2. Given below are the names of old African kingdoms and cities. Write against each the name(s) of the present country/countries in which they were located.

Kush	Great Zimbabwe
Aksum	Darfur
Ghana	Timbuktu
Mali	Hausa States
Songhay	Kingdom of Kongo
Lunda Empire	Mwenemutepa

Things to think about and discuss

1. In what major respects do the material cultures of the American civilizations differ from the early Asian and European civilizations ?
2. Discuss the importance of iron and foreign trade in the growth of African civilizations.

CHAPTER 5

The Medieval World

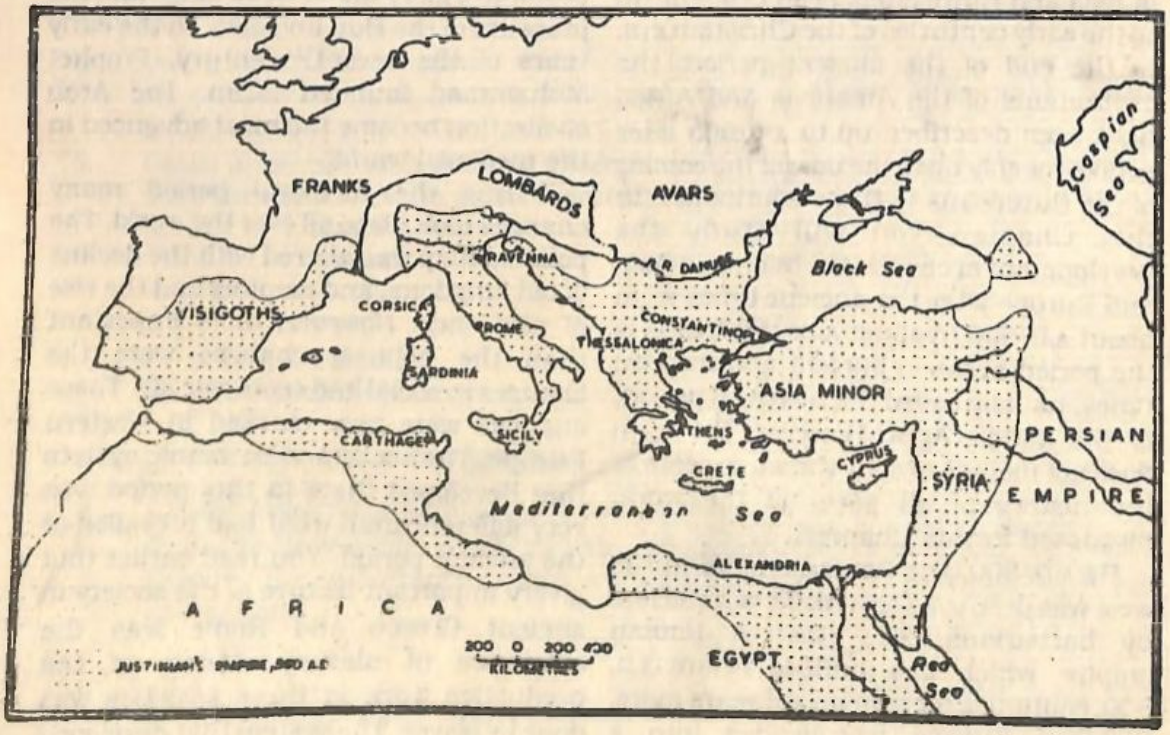
SO far in this book we have been concerned with some civilizations that arose in Asia, Europe, and the Americas and Africa in ancient times. While the story of the growth of civilization in parts of Asia and Europe has been brought up to the early centuries of the Christian era, to the end of the ancient period, the civilizations of the Americas and Africa have been described up to a much later period, roughly up to the time of the coming of the Europeans to these continents. In this Chapter, you will study the development of civilization mainly in Asia and Europe after the ancient times from about A.D. 600 to about A.D. 1500. This is the period between ancient and modern times, usually called the medieval period, or the Middle Ages. However, the term does not include exactly the same years in the history of all parts of the world discussed in this Chapter.

By A.D. 500, the Roman empire in the west was destroyed as a result of invasions by barbarians. The Eastern Roman empire, which was founded before A.D. 500, continued for a thousand years more. Western Europe was divided into a number of small kingdoms, but some conquerors tried to combine these small kingdoms into bigger ones.

About this time the Guptas ruled in India. Then that empire, too, fell from its position of glory under weak kings and the pressure of the Hun invaders. In the early years of the seventh century, Prophet Mohammad founded Islam. The Arab civilization became the most advanced in the medieval world.

During the medieval period many changes took place all over the world. The political map was altered with the decline of old kingdoms and empires and the rise of new ones. However, more important than the political changes were the changes in social and economic life. These changes were very marked in western Europe. The social and economic system that developed there in this period was very different from what had prevailed in the ancient period. You read earlier that a very important feature of the society in ancient Greece and Rome was the existence of slavery. Much of the productive work in these societies was done by slaves. The system that developed

first in western Europe in this period and later in other parts of Europe is called feudalism. The economic life under this system was predominantly rural and the main division in society was between peasants, who worked on the land and the feudal lords who either got a share of the peasants' produce or had peasants to work on their lands without any payment. Most of the produce was consumed locally. Towns and trade played very little role in the life of the people. You will read about this system in detail. In other parts of the world the changes that took place in the social and economic life of the people were not so marked. For example, in some parts of the world, the trade and towns did not decline as they did in Europe. Similarly, the institutions that developed in Europe under feudalism did not generally exist elsewhere. However, in spite of differences in the specific institutions, there were many similarities. The exploitation of the peasantry was the main feature of the social and economic systems everywhere. In some societies, such as in western Europe, it took the form of serfdom. In others, such as in India, the Zamindars and the nobility took a large portion of the peasant's produce though the status of the Indian peasant was not that of a serf. Some scholars consider the social and economic system in Asian countries including India, also to be a kind of feudalism though in many respects it was different from the European feudalism. The characteristic feature of the medieval social systems, according to them, was



Byzantine Empire during Justinian's reign

feudalism.

MEDIEVAL EUROPE

The Roman emperor Constantine had established a new capital of the eastern territories of the Roman empire in the ancient Greek city of Byzantine in A.D. 330. This city became famous as Constantinople, named after Constantine. The Roman empire in the west was destroyed as a result of the barbarian invasions but in the east it continued for about a thousand years as the Eastern Roman, or the Byzantine, empire with Constantinople as its capital. It was a vast empire and Constantinople was the largest city in Europe while London and Paris were villages. The Byzantine empire had close trade relations with countries farther east. The kind of Christianity the Byzantine emperors followed came to be known as the Eastern, or Greek, Orthodox. Many Christians in eastern countries are followers of this Church. The Byzantines built beautiful churches with lavish decorations. The most famous of these is the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople. The Turks conquered the Byzantine territories in 1453.

The downfall of the Roman empire resulted in great confusion in western Europe giving rise to a large number of

5.1 St. Sophia, Constantinople. The Church was built during the reign of Byzantine emperor Justinian in the 6th century A.D. The minarets were added later by the Turks.

Political Divisions of Europe in the 14th century

small states. About A.D. 800, Charlemagne founded an empire which included modern France and Germany and a part of Italy. This empire later broke up after his death. By A.D. 1000 a new empire—the Holy Roman Empire—came into existance and extended over Germany and Austria. Gradually other kingdoms, big and small, grew up in other parts of western Europe.

FEUDAL SYSTEM IN EUROPE

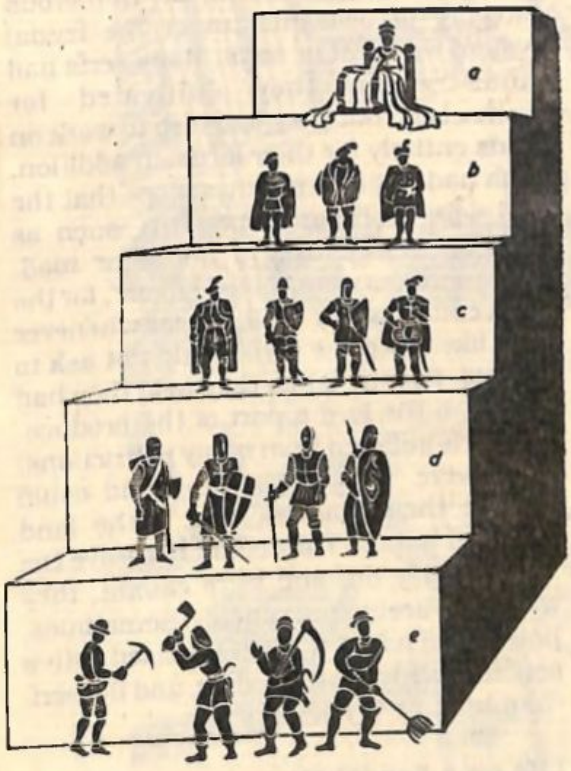
The new social and economic system that arose in Europe in the medieval times is known as the feudal system. It was essentially a rural system in which the peasants had to give a part of their produce to the lords in the form of rent or taxes or had to labour for the lords without any payment. The specific institutions of the feudal system described below pertain to the medieval societies of western Europe. In western Europe, the absence of a central authority led to the emergence of political institutions which are considered a major feature of European feudalism. The political institutions in other parts of

the world followed a different pattern.

The word 'feudal' comes from *feud* which originally meant a fief or land held on condition or service. In a feudal society, land was the source of power.

Feudal Classes and Loyalties

The feudal society in western Europe soon developed a hierarchy, or graded organization, in which every person was allotted a position. At the top stood the king. He bestowed fiefs or estates on a number of lords who were known as *dukes* and *earls*. Their lords in their turn distributed a part of their fiefs among a number of lesser lords who were called barons and, in return, secured their military support. Thus the dukes and earls were the king's vassals, that is to say, they owed allegiance directly to the king. The barons were the vassals of the dukes and earls. The knights formed the lowest category of feudal lords. Usually they were the vassals of barons for whom they performed military service. Knights did not have any vassals of their own. Every feudal lord was expected to pay homage to his overlord and could then be invested with some formal rights.



5.2 Feudal hierarchy :
a. king; b. dukes and earls; c. barons; d. knights; e. peasants

Every feudal lord, except the knight, was first a vassal and then an overlord with a number of vassals under him. The relationship from top to bottom was one of allegiance. No vassal owned any land; he only held the land as of his overlord. The vassal was in every way his lord's man. He recognized no other authority than that of his overlord.

In time of need, for example, when the king fought a war, he could demand military assistance from his vassals. These vassals—the dukes and the earls—demanded the same assistance from their vassals, the barons, and the barons from their vassals, the knights. Every feudal lord contributed a detachment of warriors, and thus a fighting army would be formed. The feudal hierarchy was so strong that even the king would not call a baron or a knight directly and demand assistance from him. Hierarchical stages had to be carefully respected.

Feudal Lords

Each feudal lord was all-powerful within his fief. He had his own soldiers; he levied taxes on those who lived in his fief; he acted as a judge and tried and punished those against whom complaints were made. The result was that there was very little political unity in feudal countries

and a strong central power was not allowed to develop. Sometimes the greater lords grew so powerful that they even ignored the king and refused to obey him.

Soon, this system became hereditary. The eldest son of a lord succeeded him and demanded an oath of allegiance from his father's vassals. The other sons of a lord were lords and the vassals' sons were vassals. Thus grew up a rigid society, somewhat similar to our caste system. It was difficult for a person to grow out of his class; he was bound to the class in the hierarchy in which he happened to be born.

Peasants

So far we have discussed the feudal lords of different categories who held the land as vassals of their overlords. These lords did not cultivate their lands themselves; they had peasants to do it for them. These peasants formed the lowest class in fuedal society and also the largest section of the population. They were also divided into a number of categories.

5.3 The illustration shows a peasant bringing grain, fruits and vegetables, and wine to the lord.

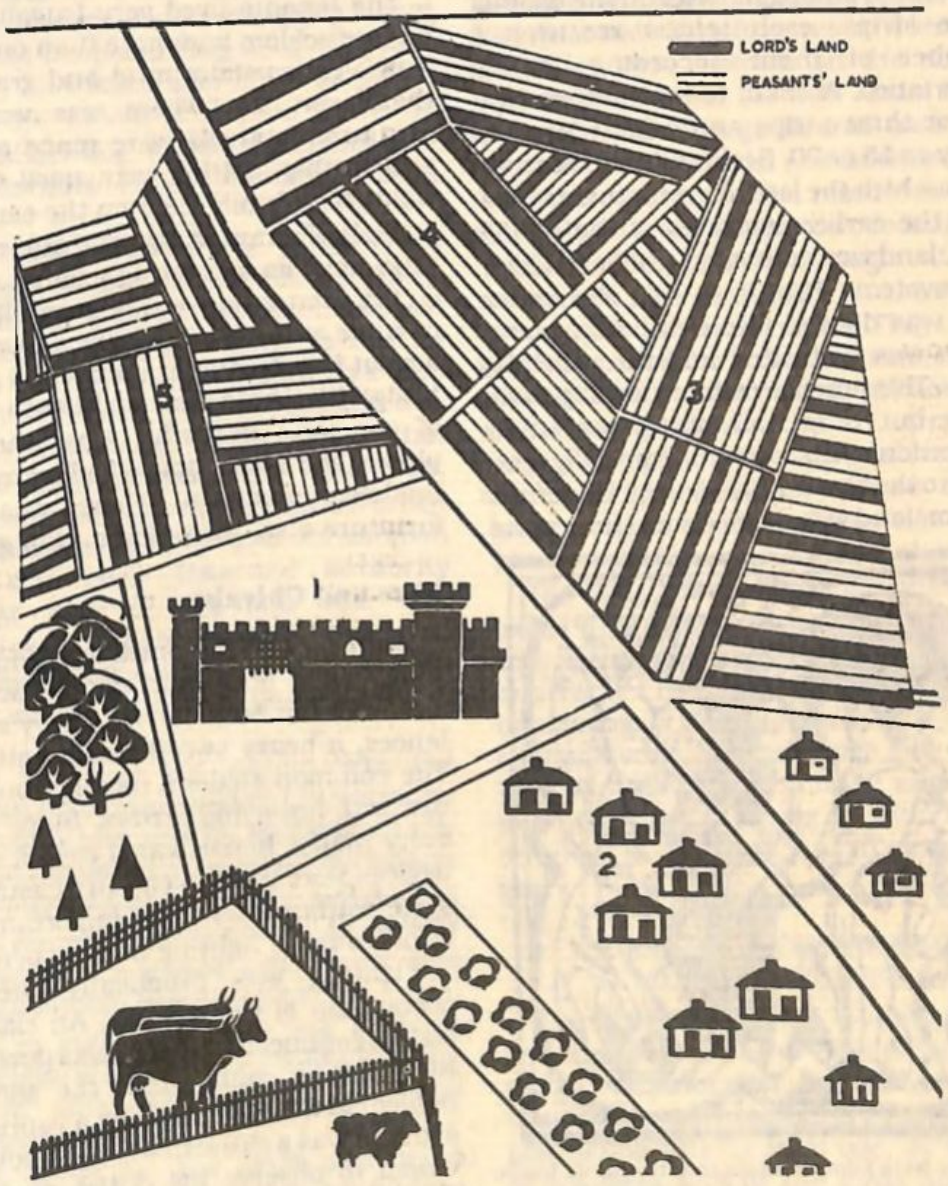
Freeholders formed the first category. They received their lands from the lords which they used and managed as their own. They did not work for their lords, but paid a tax to them. The second category of peasants was that of *villeins*, who gave a part of the produce of the lands to their lords. Villeins had also to work on the lord's fields for a fixed number of days, but on other days they were free to look after their fields which they had received from their overlords.

The last, and the most numerous category of peasants under the feudal system was that of *serfs*. Many serfs had lands which they cultivated for themselves, but they had also to work on lands entirely for their lords. In addition, serfs had to perform any service that the lord wanted them to perform, such as building or repairing a house or road. These services were 'forced labour', for the lords could call for their service whenever they liked and the serfs could not ask to be paid. For the lands they held they had to pay to the lord a part of the produce. The serfs suffered from many restrictions. They were 'tied' to the land and could change their masters only if the land changed hands. They could not leave the land; if they did and were caught, they were severely punished. Sometimes, however, if a lord was very pleased with a serf, he gave him his freedom, and the serf, then became a *freeman*.

Life on a Feudal Manor

Feudal life as you have seen was based on agriculture. The village farm was the

manor, the size of which varied from place to place. Its centre was the manor house of the lord where he lived or which he visited, for the lords often possessed several manors. The manor included a large farm which supported all those who worked on it, a pasture area where the manor cattle grazed, and comon woods which supplied fuel and timber. A manor always had a number of cottages where



5.4 Plan of a Manor. 1. Manor house; 2. Peasants' huts 3. Winter field; 4. Fallow land; 5. Spring field. The illustration also shows the division of land into strips.

the common people lived, some workshops to provide for manor needs, and a chapel.

The farm land was divided into a large number of strips, each only a few furrows in width and as long as the field. Land was distributed among tenants on the basis of these strips, each tenant receiving a number of them according to his importance. A small tenant perhaps got two or three strips and a big tenant as many as 15 or 20. Serfs cultivated certain strips which the lords kept for themselves.

In the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages, land was cultivated under the 'two-field system'. That is to say, the manor farm was divided into two parts, one of which was cultivated and the other lay fallow. This practice restored fertility to the lands but only half of it was under cultivation. This system gradually gave place to the 'three-field system'. Under this system, land was divided into three parts, one of which was planted with an early crop and the second with a late crop, and the third lay fallow. This meant that two-thirds of the land could be used for cultivation at a time.

5.5 There were many peasant revolts against feudal oppression in medieval Europe. The illustration shows peasant men, women and children being taken prisoner after a peasant revolt in Spain.

The tenants lived very frugally. Their houses seldom had more than one room; they were made of mud and grass with thatch on top. There was very little furniture; utensils were made of wood, and leather bottles were used to store water. The family slept on the earth floor on beds of straw or hay, and animal skins were used as a covering against cold.

The manor house was generally made of stone and often built like a castle with a moat full of water around it and a drawbridge, like those that can be seen in some of our forts in Delhi, Agra and other places. The manor house had many rooms but few windows. There was some furniture also, including a dining-table.

Wars and Chivalry

Battles in feudal times were fought on horse-back, both man and horse, fitted with armour. Men carried heavy shields, lances, a heavy sword and a battle-axe. The common soldiers usually fought on foot with bows and arrows. Since almost every manor house was a castle, several devices were used to capture castles and siege warfare was more important than hand-to-hand fighting in the open.

Fighting was practically the only occupation of the nobility. An elaborate code of conduct for knights was developed. Kings alone could make the son of a nobleman a knight. Making a young man a knight was a ritual in which he solemnly vowed to observe his duties as a loyal vassal and to protect the weak. He could then prefix 'Sir' to his name, as many Englishmen do even today when the

reigning monarch knights them. Like the lords, the knights hated to work with their hands and preferred to spend their time fighting.

The knights often fought duels and organized tournaments where they fought with blunt weapons. They showed special courtesy to women and often fought to uphold the honour of women. There are many interesting stories of knights that resemble those of Rajput heroes in Indian history.

Feudalism served its purpose of bringing a measure of orderliness, safety and security to medieval life. It allowed social and economic activity to run its normal course. But feudalism had also another side to it. It developed, and was dependent on, a rigid class system. Man was divided from man, class from class, and this stood in the way of political unity. The nobles looked down upon the common man, and their inherited authority brought with it one-man rule and oppression. The lords were often too powerful for the kings to control and fought among themselves for small selfish ends.

The king had no contact with the common man, who was left entirely to the mercy of his lord, and the lord was usually irresponsible and unmindful of the welfare of common people. The feudal system also led to economic stagnation. The wealth produced by the peasants and the artisans was wastefully consumed by the feudal lords, in luxurious living and in wars. Individual enterprise and initiative were all but unknown. Innovations were encouraged.

The desire for new lands and riches encouraged the lords and leaders of the Church to fight the 'holy wars', or the Crusades. In the 7th Century, the Arabs had conquered Palestine. The holy places of Christianity were in this area and the stated cause of the wars was to regain the Holy Land. The lords who joined these wars often fought among themselves. Although the wars ended in a fiasco, they had some indirect influences on European life. They were a drain on the nobles resources. The contact with Arabs led to demand for luxury goods and trade and commerce with the east was extended. The wars were a drain on the resources of the Church and the Popes took recourse to questionable practices to augment their resources. The contacts with the Arabs, however, had a positive result. They taught the Europeans the arts and sciences of the Arab civilization. They acquired knowledge of the compass and the art of making paper. A large number of English words of Arabic origin date from these wars— *lemon, sugar, syrup, sofa, muslin, satin, bazaar, algebra, zero, cypher, chemistry.*

The early Middle Ages have often been called the Dark Ages, and to some extent they were truly dark. The people led a miserable life. Education was very uncommon. The helplessness of the common man, the arbitrary rule of the king and the barons and the absence of national unity—all these conditions were common in Europe for over a thousand years.

TRADE AND COMMERCE IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

The emergence of feudalism was accompanied by the decline of trade and towns. The economic basis of feudalism was small-scale holdings of peasants. The production was for local use, by families of peasants and of the lords and their retainers. The needs of the people for non-agricultural goods such as cloth and

agricultural implements were met either within the village or at the medieval fairs, which were held at regular intervals. At the fairs agricultural products were exhanged for non-agricultural goods which were produced by artisans with simple tools and implements. There was no great need for towns in this economy.

However, gradually, particularly from the eleventh century, trade and towns began to become important. There was an increase in the demand by the lords for luxury goods. The contacts with the East which the 'holy wars' had facilitated created demand for luxury goods of the East. With the extension of cultivation and improvements in agricultural methods, many peasants also were in a position to exchange a part of their agricultural products for non-agricultural goods. These developments encouraged the growth of crafts and trade and led to the emergence of towns.

Medieval Cities of Europe

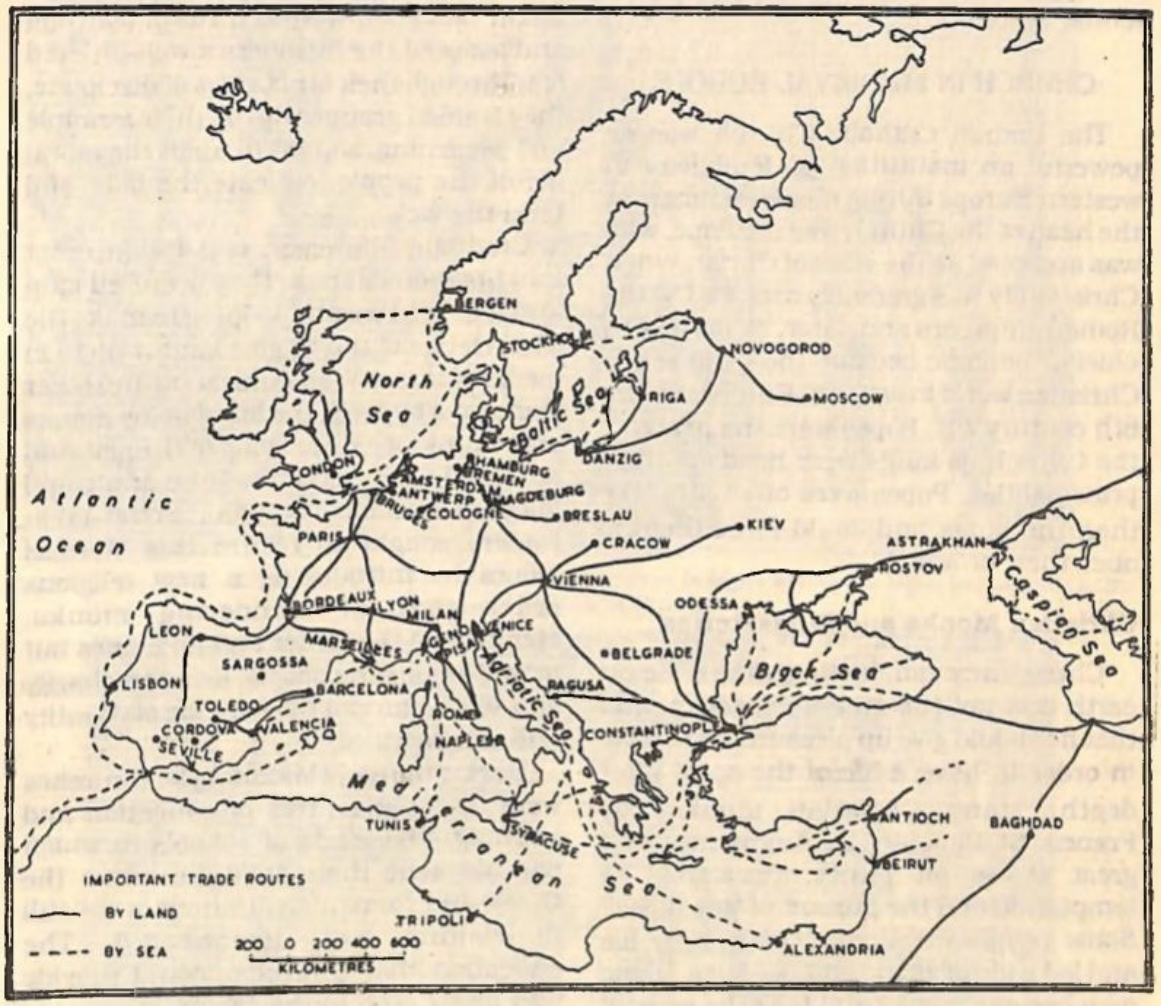
New towns began to emerge as centres of crafts and trade. In the beginning, some peasants engaged in crafts along with parctising agriculture. Gradually they became full-time artisans and settled in places where it was easy to exchange their products for agricultural goods. Merchants who traded in goods settled in such places. The first towns were very small, no bigger than villages but as the number of artisans increased and the trade became extensive, the towns became bigger. When western Europe traded with the East, the cities in Italy enjoyed an advantage over others because of their location. Genoa, Florence and Venice thus became great trading centres. To these cities came cotton, silk, precious stones, spices from the East, for distribution all over Europe. The wealth of these cities soon made them centres of culture.

Nearly all European cities in medieval times depended on commerce and were, therefore, located either on the seacoast or on trade routes. In Italy, for example, Venice and Genoa were sea ports, while Florence, Milan and Pisa stood on trade routes. Rome's case was exceptional. It was an ancient city and also the seat of the office of the Pope. In what are now Holland and Belgium, in Germany, in France and in England, a number of cities grew up that were either sea-ports or centres of trade and commerce. These cities are among Europe's leading cities today.

Nearly all towns had walls around them to guard them against armed brigands and enemy feudal lords. The same was true of medieval Indian towns. The walls gave the towns protection but streets were narrow, crooked, mostly unpaved and dirty. Sanitation was poor and people often fell prey to epidemic diseases. The Black Death in England—perhaps a disease similar to bubonic plague—wiped out about one-third of the English population in the middle of the 14th century.

Increased trade, commerce and specialization of crafts made it neccessary for merchants and craftsmen to organize themselves into guilds. There were guilds of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, barbers, leather-workers, carpenters and many others. They prescribed standards for their crafts, regulated prices and hours of work and admitted new members only after they had served as apprentices for some length of time.

Guilds, specially the craft guilds, did serve a useful purpose in medieval times. Guild members were jealous of their professional skills and looked after the



Medieval European Cities and Trade Routes

social and economic needs of fellow members. However, guilds turned into closed groups, keeping out newcomers and in every way looking out for their own gain.

The revival of trade and the emergence of towns had some important consequence. They led to the importance of the merchant in society and soon he started wielding influence not only in social and economic life but also in political matters. A very important characteristic of medieval towns was their freedom from all sorts of feudal controls. The people of these towns could move about, marry their children, and acquire and dispose of their property as they liked. Many cities had obtained their freedom from the kings and elected their own officials to administer their affairs.

These developments undermined the feudal system.

CHURCH IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE

The Roman Catholic Church was as powerful an institution as feudalism in western Europe during medieval times. At the head of the Church was the Pope, who was accepted as the vicar of Christ. When Christianity was gradually accepted by the Roman emperors and, later, by barbarian chiefs, the Pope became the head of the Christian world in western Europe. By the 6th century A.D., Popes were the heads of the Church as kings were heads of their principalities. Popes were often stronger than the kings and could force them to obey their orders.

Christian Monks and Monasteries

Christianity taught that man's life on earth was not the end of existence, and that he should give up pleasures in this life in order to have a life of the spirit after death. Many Christian monks—St. Francis, St. Benedict, St. Augustine—laid great stress on purity, resistance to temptation and the pursuit of 'goodness'. Some people withdrew from worldly life and led a life of virtue and penance. Some men became monks and took the vows of obedience, poverty and chastity. Some women became nuns and lived in nunneries. The institutions where the monks lived together were called monasteries. This may remind you of the Buddhist *bhikshus* and their *viharas*.

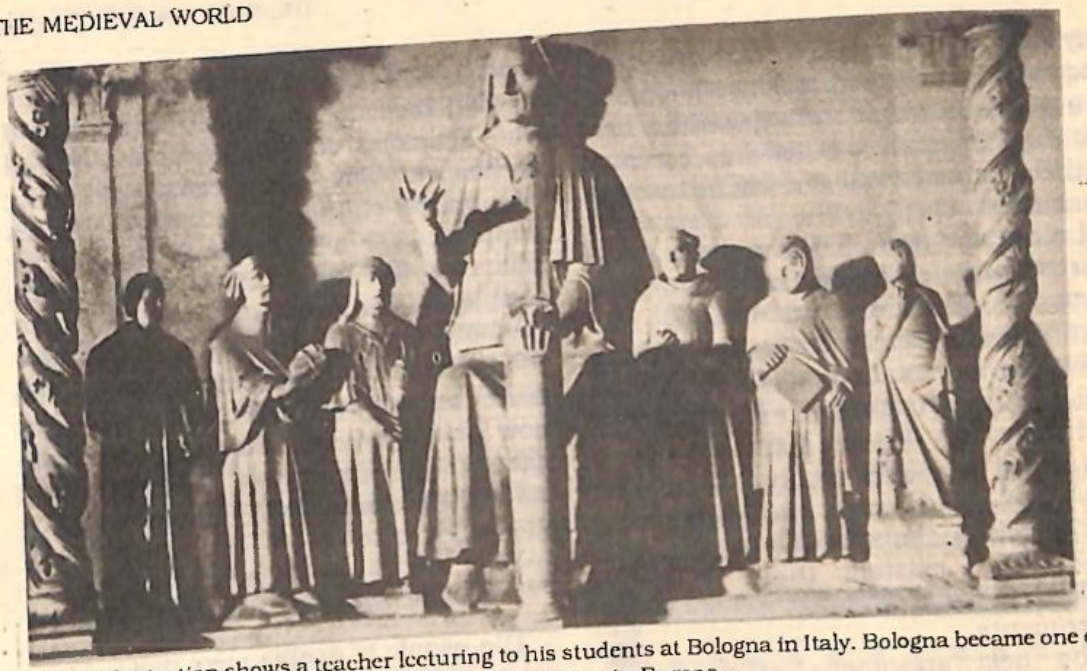
Life in monastery was well organized. Monks and nuns had to observe rigid rules of discipline. They could not marry or own property. They either worked or prayed. The slightest disobedience brought hard punishment.

Some monasteries, like those founded by St. Benedict, were centres of learning and assured the members a well-ordered life. Through their strict rules of discipline, they trained groups who by their example and preaching, sought to uplift the moral life of the people, educate the laity and tend the sick.

Gradually, however, corruption crept into the monasteries. They acquired land and amassed wealth, helping to make the Church one of the biggest land-owners in medieval times. With cultivation and other work done by serfs, the life of many monks and nuns was no longer frugal and austere. Luxury, good food and drink, and idleness became common. Some great leaders sought to reform this state of affairs by introducing a new religious order—that of wandering monks. Members of this order had no homes but moved among the people, living on charity and setting an example of a life of chastity and self-sacrifice.

During the early Middle Ages, Churches were the only centres of education and learning. The kinds of schools to which parents sent their children, when the Greek and Roman civilizations were still flourishing had disappeared. The education that Churches could provide was like a drop in the ocean.

For a long time, monks and priests were the only literate men in Europe. Learning was kept alive by the Church and the monks in the monasteries. However, the learning fostered by the Church was a narrow type. The subjects that it taught were grammar, logic, arithmetic and theology. The only calling for which this education was suitable was that of a monk or a priest. The language of learning was Latin, which only churchmen could read. Everything was dominated by faith and



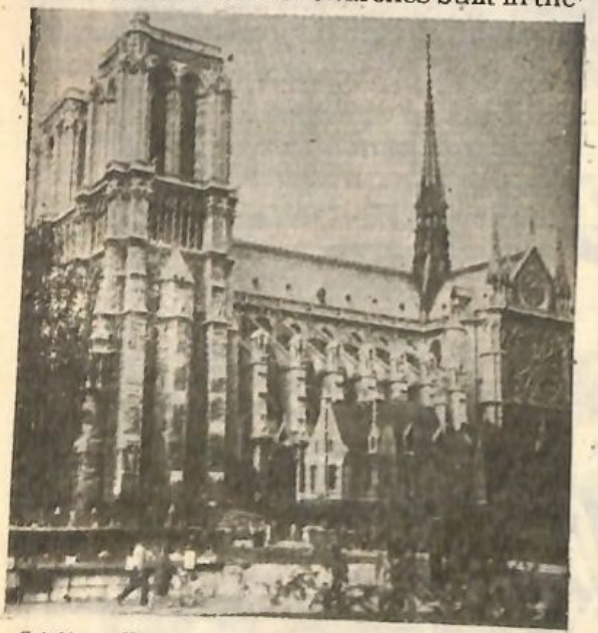
5.6 The illustration shows a teacher lecturing to his students at Bologna in Italy. Bologna became one of the first universities in Europe.

5.7 Before the invention of printing each book had to be written in hand.

anybody who appealed to reason against dogma was punished. Science had come to a standstill. Magic and superstition held the day. Belief in witches was common and the punishment for witches was to burn them alive.

Later on many universities were started, at Selerno and Bologna in Italy, Paris in France, and Oxford and Cambridge in England. However, these universities were dominated by monks and confined their education to theology and philosophy. History and science were still almost completely ignored. There were only hand-copied books and few libraries from which students could borrow the few books that existed; there were no laboratories for conducting scientific experiments.

The best specimens of European architecture in the Middle Ages are the churches. The earlier churches built in the Romanesque style were in imitation of the Roman basilica, like the Byzantine and had spacious central halls and round arches with rows of columns. The ceiling was barrel-vaulted and massive walls supported the heavy ceiling. The interior was, therefore, rather dark. The style was simple, but impressive.



5.8 Notre Dame, Paris. The cathedral of Notre Dame was one of the earlies French Cathedrals to be built in the Gothic style. It was built between A.D. 1163 and A.D. 1270

About the 12th century, a new style—the Gothic—was developed in France. The lancet arches were pointed and the walls now had windows. They brought more light to the inside and their panes of stained glass added much to the beauty of the buildings.

THE ARAB CIVILIZATION

The people of Arabia were divided into a number of tribes which lived mainly on the breeding of livestock. The various tribes were involved in wars over the possession of land, particularly pastures. During the first six hundred years of the Christian era, trade with other lands had become important and many Arabs had taken to it. Consequently trade had brought Arabs into contact with new ideas. In the 7th century, a new religion, Islam, arose in Arabia, which within a very short period not only united the warring tribes but also led to the establishment of a big empire and the building of a civilization which in many respects was the finest civilization of the time.

Rise of Islam

Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was born in Mecca in Arabia in A.D. 571. His father had died before his birth and he was brought up by his uncle. When he grew up he became a trader and travelled all over Arabia. He also worked for a widow whom he later married. He would often retire to

a cave near Mecca for meditation. When he was 40, he had 'visions of truth' and became a prophet.

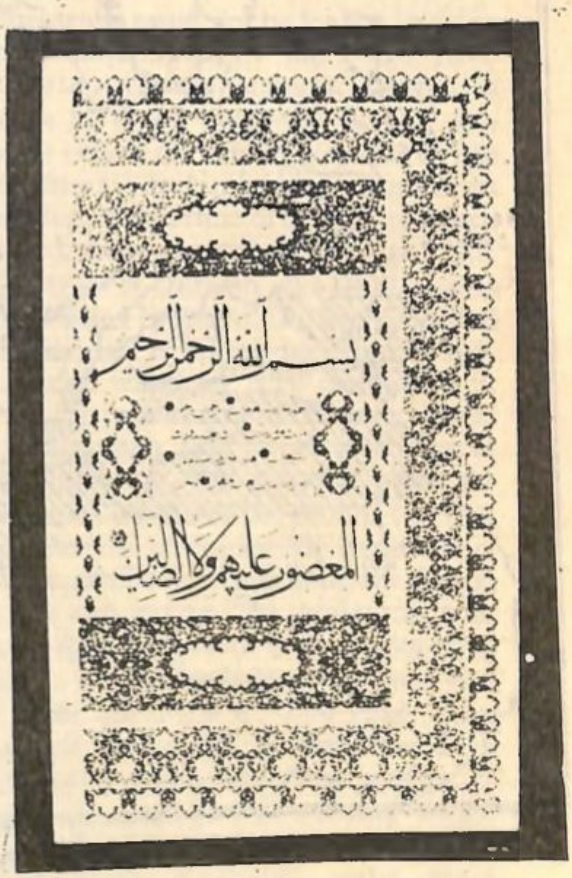
At this time, Arabia was a land of superstition and ignorance. Mecca, the city of Muhammad's birth, was a commercial and religious centre. The black rectangular stone, set in a holy building called the Kaaba, was revered by the Arabs. It can still be seen in Mecca, the city to which the Muslims go on a pilgrimage.

Muhammad's visions completely convinced him that Allah was the only God and that he was a Prophet of God. He recited what he had heard during visitations he had from God's angel. He forbade the worship of idols and made many enemies, chiefly among the rich merchants. Ultimately, he had to leave Mecca and take refuge in Medina, where he was given a warm welcome. This event took place in A.D. 622 and is known as the year of the *Hijra*, or migration, which became the first year of the Muslim calendar.

Islam teaches faith in the one all-powerful God, Allah, and in the Prophethood of Muhammad. Man is powerless before Allah and must, therefore, submit to His will. Muslims recognize earlier prophets as well as Muhammad, but believe that Muhammad was the last and the greatest. The prophets of the Jews are revered by Muslims, but they deny that Jesus was the son of God. Like the Christian religion, Islam speaks of a life after death and of a last judgement when all men shall receive the reward for their earthly actions. Muslims all the world over regard themselves as brothers and equals.

A Muslim has to regulate his life according to five principles: (1) he must proclaim the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad: *La-Ilaha illa Allah: Mohammad-ur-Rasul ullah* (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet); (2) he must offer prayers five times every day and on Friday afternoons in the mosque; (3) he must give alms to the poor as an offering to Allah and a religious act; (4) he must keep fast from dawn to dusk throughout *Ramazan*, the holy month of Islam, and (5) he should, if possible, go on a pilgrimage to Mecca, at least once in his lifetime.

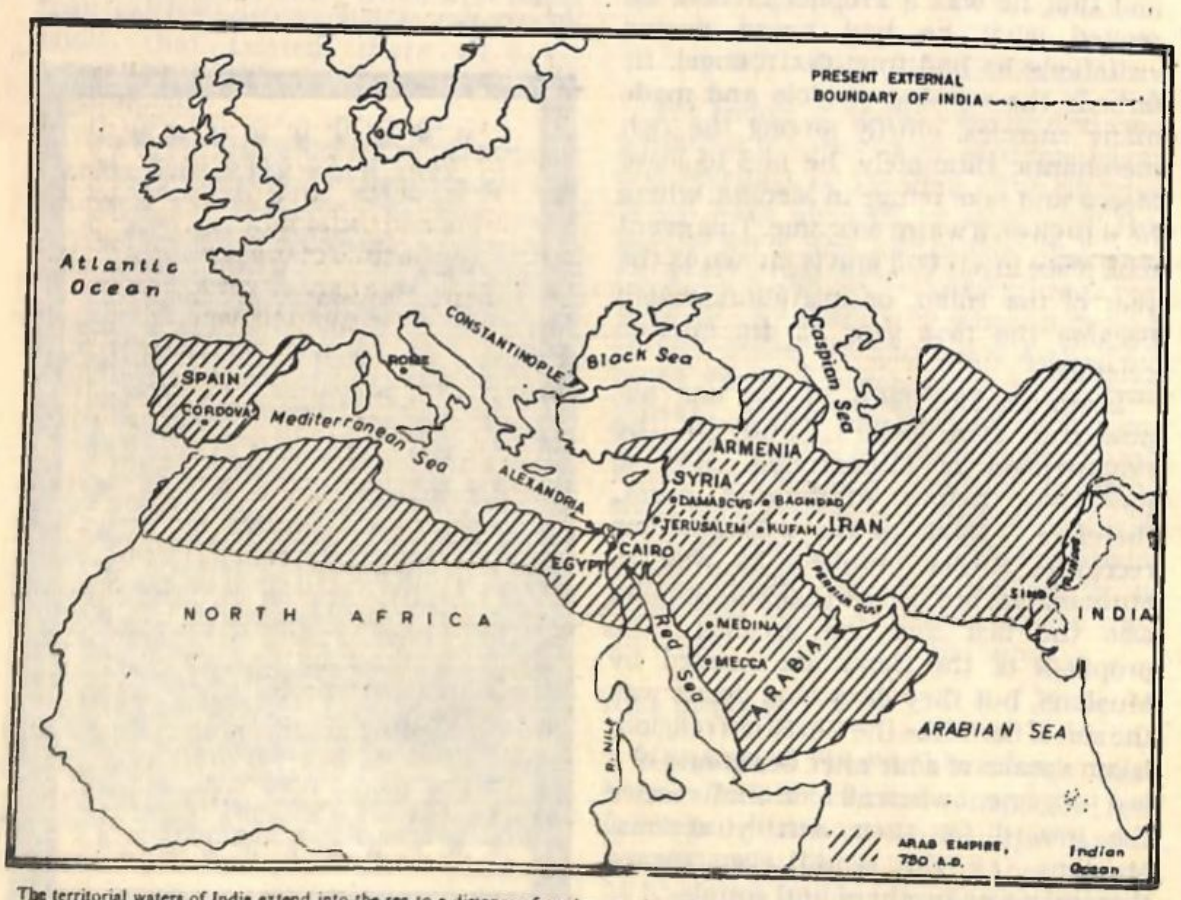
Over and above these five principles, Islam lays down some observances and also forbids some practices. No Muslim



5.9 A page from a 16th century copy of the *Quran*

should worship an idol. A Muslim must not eat pork, for the pig is unclean. He must not lend money on interest. He has to follow certain rules laid down regarding marriage and divorce. The emphasis on a life of virtue and benevolence makes Islam one of the great humanitarian religions. The holy book of the Muslims, the *Quran*, emphasizes such virtues as 'to free the captive, or to feed, in a day of famine, the orphan who is of kin, or the poor man who lieth on the ground'.

Muhammad did not claim divine origin for himself. He was not only a religious leader but also a political leader. After his death, his successors were known as *Caliphs*, or 'Khalifas' who held both religious and political authority. Muhammad knew his people well and the simplicity of his teachings easily brought the Arabs under common political rule and made them into one people. They were filled with great zeal, and Islam spread far and wide within an incredibly short time. There is no priest standing between a believer and God and no rituals govern a Muslim's worship. Prayers can be offered anywhere with the face turned towards



The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

The Arab Empire in about A.D. 750

Mecca.

The *Quran*, the holy book of Islam, it is believed, reports the word of God received by Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. It is divided into a number of *suras*, or chapters, and contains many legends and traditions helping the Arabs to absorb the teachings.

Besides the *Quran*, the life of a Muslim is guided by the *sunna*, the practices of the Prophet, and the *Hadees*, the sayings of the Prophet. These set standards for correct behaviour.

Arab Empire

Nearly all Arabia had accepted the new religion and become a unified state before the death of Prophet Muhammad in A.D. 632. From Arabia, Islam spread very fast to many other parts of the world. Within about a hundred years, the Khalifas and their generals, had conquered Iran, Syria, Egypt, Central Asia, north Africa and Spain. The Arabs had also come to India. Wherever the Arabs went, their religion went with them. This astonishingly rapid conquest was due to several causes. It was partly missionary zeal, but economic and social causes favoured the expansion. The Arabs, who were the inhabitants of a poor country, wanted richer lands. They were excellent fighters. The people of the neighbouring countries, tired of oppressive rule and fascinated by the simplicity of the teachings of Islam, welcomed the invaders. The Arab empire was the largest that the world had so far seen.

The first three Khalifas ruled from the city of Medina. Then the capital was shifted Kufah near ancient Babylon. By A.D. 660, when the Omayyad dynasty took over the reins of government, the principal city was Damascus. About 750, the Omayyads were overthrown by the Abbasids, who made Baghdad their capital. Harun Rashid, famous in many legends, was an Abbasid ruler. The Abbasids ruled for about 300 years, till the Seljuk Turks took Baghdad and ended the Arab rule. During the next four centuries, the Turks dominated the Islamic world. In the 15th century, most of these territories came under the domination of the Ottoman Turks. It was the Ottomans who took Constantinople and ended the Byzantine empire in 1453.

Arab Contributions

The Arabs must not be looked upon as mere conquerors. In fact, the Arab civilization was far superior to that of Europe in those centuries. In the pre-Islamic period of their history, the Arabs were illiterate and unfamiliar with the art of writing. At the time of the rise of Islam, it is said, there were only 17 persons in the entire tribe of Quraish who were able to write. United by Islam, the Arabs started on their quest of knowledge. They sought knowledge wherever they could find it. One of the traditions of the Prophet makes it the bounden duty of every Muslim to seek knowledge. The establishment of a vast empire facilitated the coming together of intellectual and scientific traditions of various civilizations, particularly Greek, Iranian and Indian. The Arabs made all knowledge their own and developed it further. Their knowledge of science was the most advanced in their time. They borrowed knowledge of medicine from Greece and India, and their system of medicine is still called *Yunani*, which means 'Greek'.

The Arabs produced some great physicians. An Arab scientist, Al Razi, known in Europe as Rhazes, discovered

5.10 A page from a 14th century translation of Ibn Sina's work on medicine. The illustrations show patients being examined and treated.

the true nature of smallpox, and Ibn Sina, famous in medieval Europe by the name Avicenna, discovered that tuberculosis is infectious. He also described several diseases of the nervous system. The Arabs made great advances in the knowledge of the origin of plague, ailments of the eyes, the spread of infections, and in the organization of hospitals.

In mathematics, the Arabs learned the Indian numerals and spread their use far and wide, so that in the West they are to this day called Arabic numerals. They improved upon the existing knowledge of algebra, trigonometry, and chemistry. Omar Khayyam is known to us as a great poet, but people of medieval times knew him as a mathematician. He devised a calendar which is more accurate than the Gregorian calendar used in most countries of the world today. The Arab astronomers thought it possible that the earth rotates on its axis and revolves round the sun, while people in Europe stuck to the belief that the earth was the centre of the universe. Arab experiments in chemistry let to the discovery of many new compounds like sodium carbonate, silver nitrate, and nitric and sulphuric acid.

The Arab achievements in philosophy were equally significant. Through Iran and Syria, the Arabs inherited the knowledge and intellectual traditions of Greece. Ibn Sina was recognized as a philosopher in Europe; Abu Al-Walid Mohammad Ibn Rushd, whom Europeans called Averroes, was famous in both the Islamic world and Europe. The Arab civilization, in fact, became the main link between the ancient civilizations and the modern world.

The Islamic literature in the medieval period was inspired largely by Iran. Some of the famous works of the period are the *Rubaiyat* by Omar Khayyam, *Shahnama* by Al-Firdausi, and the *Arabian Nights*, a collection of 1001 stories. The *Rubaiyat* and the *Arabian Nights* tell us much about the culture and society of the period.

5.11 The arcaded hall of the Mosque at Cordova in Spain. The construction started in A.D. 786

Arab art was influenced by Byzantine and Iranian arts, but the Arabs developed their own decorative designs. Their buildings had bulblike domes, small minarets, horse-shoe arches and twisted columns.

The characteristics of Arab architecture can be seen in the mosques, libraries, palaces, hospitals and schools of the period. The Arabs also developed a decorative style of writing called *calligraphy* and made book-illumination an art.

Arab carpets, leather work, beautiful swords, silks, inlays, metal-work, and enamelled glassware were prized everywhere. The Arabs were great traders and carried their goods far and wide.

Their caravans travelled to India and China; their ships went to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. The Arabs were the greatest mariners and explorers of the period.

Arab Society

The Khalifa was the all-powerful religious leader and the highest political authority in the Arab empire. Then came noblemen of varying status. Below them were scholars, writers, merchants and professional men, such as physicians, *qazis* and teachers. The lowest class was composed of peasants and artisans.

Slaves were numerous and were bought and sold in the open market. A rich man showed his wealth and importance by the number of slaves who attended on him.

Women were confined to their homes, but that did not always mean that they were not taught to read and write, or that they were considered inferior beings.

INDIA IN MEDIEVAL TIMES

Political Developments

As the Gupta empire grew weak, a number of kingdoms arose in north India. They fought one another, and though some of them became quite powerful for a time, none of them succeeded in establishing its supremacy. The period from the eighth to the tenth century in north India and Deccan was dominated mainly by three kingdoms—the Pala, the Pratihara and the Rashtrakuta. Of these, the Rashtrakuta kingdom was the most powerful. There also arose a number of Rajput states in north India, particularly after the decline of the Pratiharas. These states were continuously involved in wars with one another, though some of them such as the Chauhans of Ajmer, the Gahadavalas of Kanauj and the Paramars of Malwa established powerful kingdoms.

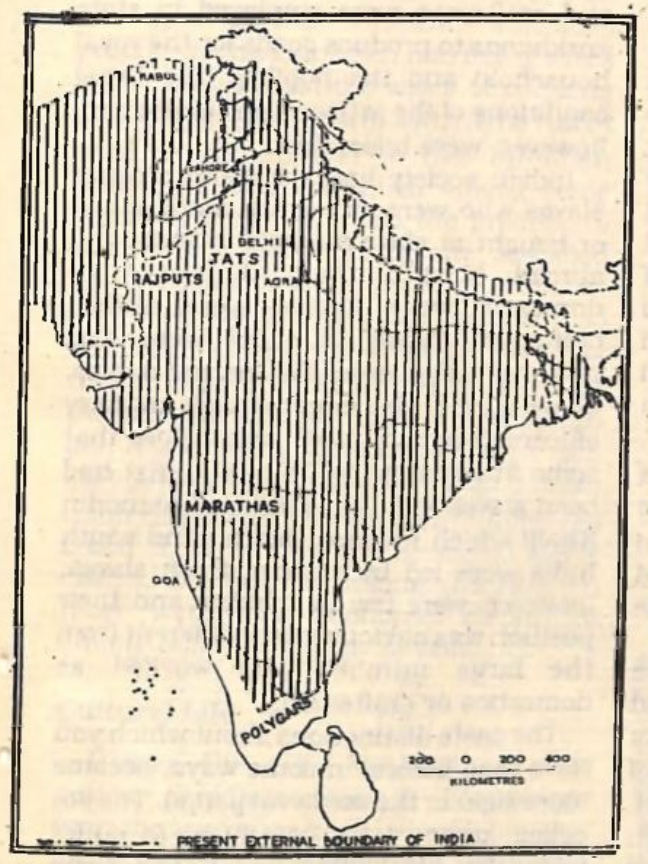
The most powerful kingdom to emerge in India after the Guptas was that of the Cholas. The Chola kings subdued the Pallavas. After defeating the Pandya and Chera rulers, they established their domination over almost the entire peninsular India from the late tenth to the twelfth centuries. The Chola armies also marched across Orissa into Bengal where they defeated the local rulers. The Cholas had a powerful navy. They conquered Sri Lanka, which they occupied for about 50 years, and the Maldives. They also sent an expedition against the Sailendra empire, which then dominated Malaysia and Indonesia, and conquered some areas of that empire. A number of kingdoms arose in Deccan and south India after the Chola power declined in the thirteenth century.

The Turks established their empire, the Sultanat of Delhi, early in the thirteenth century. The Sultanat lasted about 200

years. During the rule of the Khalji and Tughlaq dynasties in the fourteenth century, almost entire north India was brought under one rule. Deccan and parts of south India were also conquered by the Delhi Sultans. During this period the Mongols had overrun large parts of Asia and Europe and had established their rule over China. India was also threatened by Mongol invasions for some time.

From the middle of the fourteenth century, for about 200 years, the political history of the Deccan and south India was dominated by Bahmani and Vijayanagar kingdoms. In north India, there were a large number of small states which emerged after the decline of the Delhi Sultanat. This period, though one of political disunity, was significant from the point of view of cultural development.

From the middle of the sixteenth century, an all-India empire once again began to be built. The process of building an all-India empire started during the reign of Akbar, when most of north India and large parts of Deccan were brought under the Mughal empire. It reached its highest point during the reign of Aurangzeb in the second half of the seventeenth century when almost the entire country was brought under one rule. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the disintegration of the Mughal empire also began. By early eighteenth century India was once again divided into a number of big and small states. The decline of the Mughal empire is usually taken to mark the end of the medieval period of Indian history. By then, new elements had entered the Indian scene. These were the European trading companies. One of them—the English East India Company—emerged supreme by about the middle of the eighteenth century and during the next hundred years established its rule over India.



Government of India copyright 1988
Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India
The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line

The Mughal Empire in about A.D. 1700

Social and Economic Life

The medieval Indian economy, like the

economy in other medieval societies, was agricultural. The produce of the peasants was the primary source of revenue of the states, big or small. The revenue demand on the peasants, that is the share of the peasants' produce which was taken away by others—by the state and various intermediaries between the state and the peasants—was sometimes as high as 50 per cent. Naturally, the lot of the peasants was not a happy one. There was a hierarchy of persons who shared the land revenue. These included 'rajas' or 'rais' who retained some of their rights even after their territories became part of larger kingdoms and empires, zamindars and village headmen who had their own land holdings and also had the responsibility of collecting land revenue for the state, and others who had been given grants of land by the rulers. During most of the medieval period, salaries to the nobles and high officials of the state were not paid in cash. They were paid through assignments of land, that is, lands from which the expected revenue would be equivalent to their salary. All these groups of people did not cultivate the lands themselves. Some of them lived in great luxury.

After an initial period of decline, there was a revival of crafts and of trade and commerce in medieval India. A number of cities became important as centres of trade. Some of these cities were Delhi, Agra, Multan, Lahore, Ahmadabad, Dacca, Surat, Khambat (Cambay) and Burhanpur. They won the highest praise from the European travellers visiting India. Some of these cities were bigger than the biggest cities of Europe at that time. Indian goods were prized everywhere and had a big market in foreign countries. Besides cotton, woollen and silk textiles, indigo and saltpetre were the chief articles of export. Indian merchants who controlled the trade in Indian goods were very prosperous. Later, European trading companies entered the scene. They came to dominate India's foreign trade and interfere in the political affairs of the country. The state, particularly under the Sultans and the Mughal emperors, also promoted crafts and thousands of artisans and craftsmen were employed in state *karkhanas* to produce goods for the royal household and the nobility. The living conditions of the artisans and craftsmen, however, were miserable.

Indian society had a large number of slaves who were either prisoners of war or bought at slave markets in India and abroad. Most of them were used for domestic work. Some were skilled craftsmen. Some of them were also personal bodyguards of rulers and nobles. Some slaves also became high military officers. You may have read before that some Sultans of the Delhi Sultanat had been slaves and that armies of Alauddin Khalji which invaded Deccan and south India were led by a slave. Such slaves, however, were few in number and their position was obviously very different from the large number who worked as domestics or craftsmen.

The caste distinctions about which you have read before, in some ways, became more rigid in the medieval period. The so-called lower castes continued to suffer from the disabilities which the caste system imposed on them. There was a proliferation of *jatis* based on occupations. The period also saw the emergence of new castes. This happened as a result of the assimilation of foreigners, who during the last centuries of the ancient period had settled in India, in the Hindu social organization. Rajputs emerged as an

important new caste during this period. The Hindu religious reformers attacked the oppressive nature of the caste system and many Bhakti saints of the period belonged to the so-called lower castes. There was a further deterioration in the position of women. There was a tendency for the marriageable age of girls to be lowered. Sati– the burning of the widow on the pyre of her husband–was also practised. The king often had many wives and sometimes all the wives of the king who died had to perform sati. Some rulers tried to put an end to this inhuman practice, but it continued among some sections. There was also the practice of secluding women among the so-called upper castes, and the use of *purdah*.

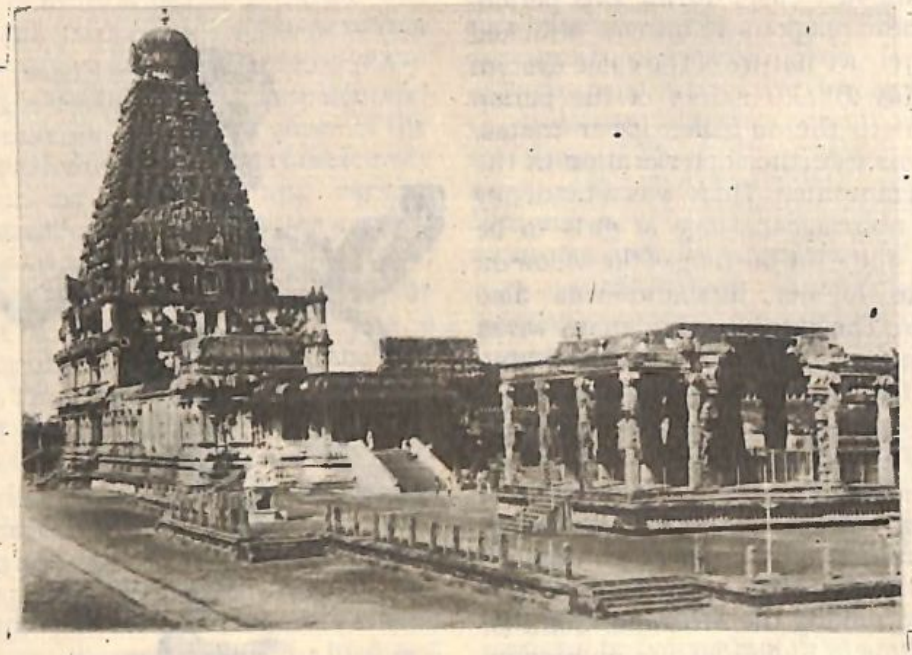
Something like a caste system also developed among the Muslims. Some of the Muslims in India had originally come from outside India, from Central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan. They formed their own exclusive groups. They also looked down upon those who had become converts to Islam from among the so-called lower castes. Besides, as among the Hindus, there were wide economic disparities among different groups of Muslims.

5.12 Bronze image of Natraja of the Chola period.

Cultural Life

During the early centuries of this period, Buddhism almost disappeared from the land of its birth, though many of its beliefs were absorbed into Hinduism. Jainism also declined, though it continued, for some time, to be important in parts of southern and western India. Shankaracharya was the leading philosopher in this period who re-established the influence of the Vedanta school of philosophy throughout the country. He also played an important role in diminishing the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. The most important feature of Hindu religion was the growing popularity of the worship of Vishnu and Shiva, and later, also of Shakti in the form of Kali, Durga and other goddesses. The Alvar and Nayanar saints played an important role in popularizing Bhakti– the path of devotion to God as a means to attain salvation in parts of southern India. In later centuries, Bhakti became popular all over the country.

A development of great significance in this period was the advent of Islam in India. India's first contacts with Islam began through Arab traders soon after its rise in Arabia. Later, it spread to many



5.12a A view of the Brihadeswara temple at Thanjavur

5.12b A view of the Sun Temple at Konark

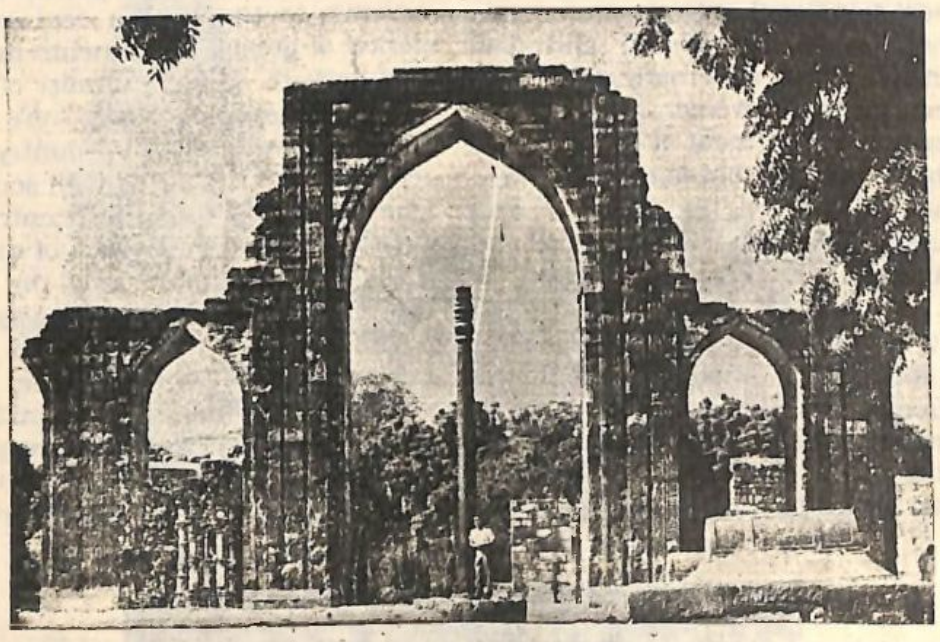
parts of India after the Turks who had embraced Islam and established their rule over large parts of India. In course of time, Islam became the second most popular religion in India.

From the thirteenth century onwards, the most significant religious movements in India were the Bhakti and Sufi movements. There were many similarities between the two movements, though the former was a movement of Hindu saints and the latter of Muslim saints. Both were against formalism in religion and emphasized love and devotion to God and human brotherhood. Both strove for unity. The Bhakti saints attacked the caste system and rituals and, as has been mentioned before, many Bhakti saints came from the so-called lower castes. These movements played an important role in bringing the people of all communities together. A significant development in this period was the rise of a new religion—Sikhism. It arose as a result of the fusion of many ideas of Hinduism and Islam. The Sikh scripture *Adi Granth* contains compositions of Bhakti and Sufi saints.

The early medieval period from the seventh to the twelfth century was a period of great achievements in art and architecture. A large number of temples with their specific styles were built in different parts of the country. These temples were decorated with sculptures. One of the most important contributions of this period is in the field of sculpture. Particularly notable are the bronze sculptures of the Cholas. This was also the period when most modern Indian languages began to take shape.

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanat marked the beginning of a new phase in India's cultural development. The Turks brought with them the cultural traditions

5.13 An image from the 13th century Hoysala temple at Belur in Karnataka

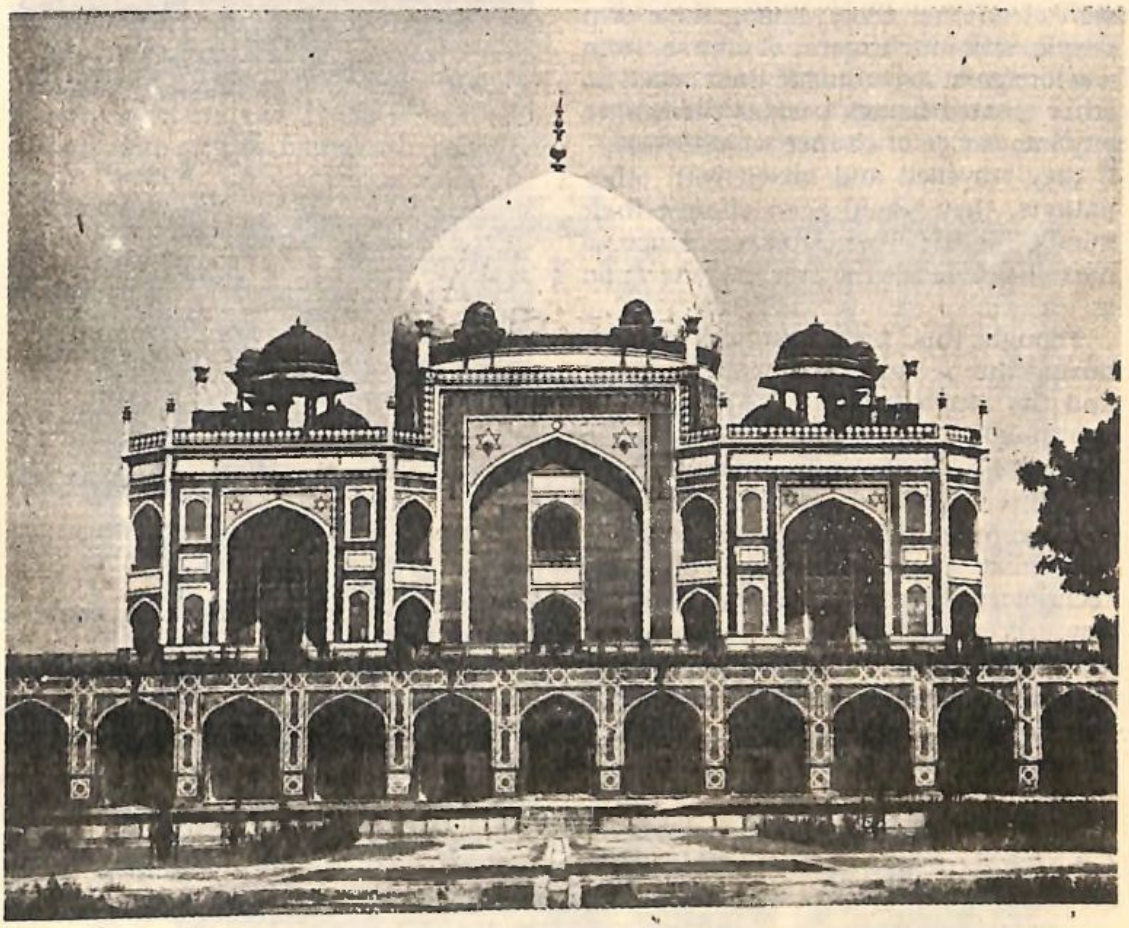


5.14 Arches of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, Delhi

of Arabia, Central Asia and Iran. The mixing of these traditions, with the earlier Indian traditions led to the emergence of new styles in architecture and art, music and literature. A new composite culture began to take shape in the country, which reached its zenith in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the Mughals. Some of the most magnificent monuments of Indian architecture were built during this period. Modern Indian languages and literature in these languages also developed during this period. Besides Sanskrit, Persian became the most important language of administration as well as of learning in most parts of India. Another language, Arabic, was the language of Islamic theological learning. A new language, Urdu, developed in the urban centres of north India and Deccan. In music, new instruments and new *ragas* were introduced. Under the Mughals, the art of painting developed as a major art form and it influenced many later schools of painting in India. New forms of literary writings developed besides devotional

literature in various languages. A large number of historical works were written in this period.

In India, developments of a similar type failed to take place. One of the conspicuous weakneses of Indian society



5.15 Humayun's tomb, Delhi

There were some weaknesses in India's social and cultural development because of which later India was left behind by certain other countries of the world. You will read about certain developments in the next chapter, which began to take place in Europe in the fifteenth century which can be said to have marked the beginning of modern age of world history.

was its insularity, that is, its lack of relationship with other cultures, in the early medieval period. Indians became unaware of the developments taking place outside India. Travel across the seas began to be considered a sin. About the attitude of India's men of learning, Albiruni, a scholar who came from Central Asia to India in the early eleventh century, in his

book on India wrote, "They are haughty, foolish, vain, self-centered, stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste among their own people, still much more, of course, from any foreigner. According to their belief, no other created beings besides them have any knowledge of science whatsoever.... If they travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their minds, for their ancestors were not so narrow-minded as the present generation is."

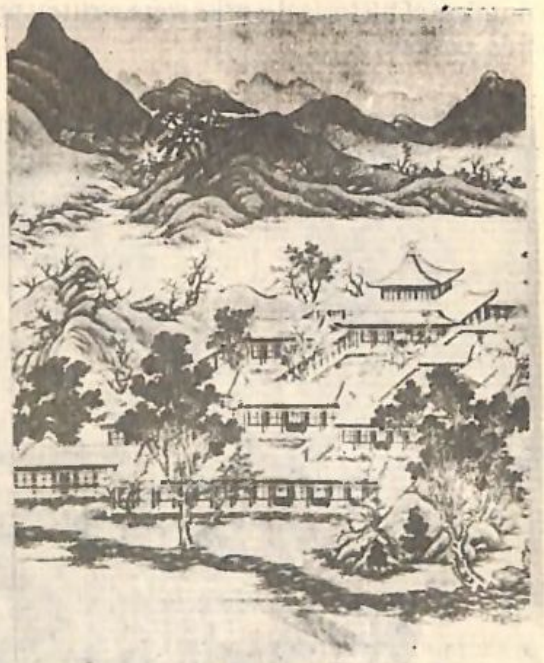
Though this insularity was broken during the period of the Delhi Sultanat and the Mughal empire, the emphasis continued to be laid on past learning. In the field of philosophy, for example, there was little new thinking and scholars only wrote commentaries on old texts. There was also a neglect of science and technology. From the sixteenth century onwards, revolutionary developments took place in Europe in science and, later, in technology. Indian rulers and men of learning, however, remained unaware of these developments.

CHINA AND JAPAN IN MEDIEVAL TIMES

CHINA

Political Developments

From the early seventh century, China was ruled by the T'ang dynasty. It gave China an efficient administration with the revival of competitive examinations for state services, tolerance in matters of religion and a flourishing commerce. The rule of



5.16 The Summer Palace of the Manchu Emperors of China, Beijing

the T'ang dynasty (A.D. 618-906) was followed by the Sung dynasty for about 300 years. After this, for about 100 years China was ruled by the Mongols who at this time dominated many parts of Asia and Europe. Under them also China continued to make advances in science and culture.

The rule of the Mongols in China was followed by that of the Ming dynasty which continued for about 300 years. In 1644, China was conquered by the Manchus who continued to rule until A.D. 1911. But the country's political history during the medieval period is not of so much interest as her culture and achievements. In fact, her progress was generally continuous during the long period from the 6th

century to the 19th century when imperialist domination of China began.

Agriculture, Crafts, Trade and Commerce

Agriculture was the principal occupation of the people and they grew chiefly millet and rice, tea and sugarcane. Production of silk increased. Irrigation continued to receive the attention of the rulers, and there was a vast network of canals and dykes. With the invention of the water-wheel, water could be pumped to fields above the level of the canals.

China's foreign trade, which was important under the Hans, was expanded and Chinese goods—especially silk, porcelain and paper—were prized everywhere. Porcelain objects, China's speciality, were valued very highly for their elegance and artistic qualities. China traded with Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Central Asia, Iran, Byzantine empire and many other countries. The route of the caravans to Central Asia, Iran and the Byzantine empire was called the 'Great Silk Route'. Chinese trading towns were situated on the seacoast and on the trade route.

China imported large quantities of spices, sandalwood, ivory and fine textiles.

5.17 The living style of China's high officials

To prevent drain on the country's wealth, the Sung rulers started the use of paper money. It is no surprise today to find paper currency used for actual money everywhere, but it was unheard of when the Chinese began it. But the Ming rulers discouraged China's trade with the outside world after the 15th century and did not even allow their subjects to travel freely overseas. Trade was restricted mainly to the port of Canton. Restrictions on contacts with the outside world were harmful to Chinese progress.

The life of the common people in medieval China was generally very hard. The peasants spent their entire time working in the fields. A large part of their produce was taken by the tax-collectors, and they were made to do forced labour building fortresses and palaces. In medieval times, large estates passed into the hands of high officials and military officers who took for themselves as much as two-thirds of the peasants' produce. If the crops failed, thousands died of starvation. Sometimes, the peasants revolted against their cruel treatment.

The richer Chinese lived a life of ease in palatial houses. They despised work and developed strange customs— for example, the growing of long fingernails, which they capped with silver.

Chinese Achievements in Art and Science

In spite of the terrible conditions of the Chinese people as a whole, medieval China made progress in many aspects of human endeavour. From very early times, the Chinese knew the magnetic properties of lodestone. In the medieval period they applied this knowledge to the making of the mariner's compass. It consisted of a magnetized piece of iron shaped like a fish floating in water. The Chinese invention of gunpowder, during this period, was another great achievement. They called gunpowder the 'fire drug' and used it first for fireworks. The invention of gunpowder was made in China in the 10th century, about 400 years before the knowledge reached the Western world

Other Chinese advances included instruments for astronomical observations, mechanical clocks, and improvements in the smelting of iron and steel. The Chinese made ironchain suspension bridges as early as the 10th century and devised the first method of printing. In the beginning, they cut what they wanted to print on blocks of wood, applied ink and impressed as many copies as they wanted. Later, in the 11th century, they invented a movable type consisting of separate characters. These characters were made first of clay and later of metal. With this improvement more books could be printed and made available to a large number of people. The importance of this invention for the spread of knowledge was as great as the invention of paper.

The rich literature in history, fiction and poetry which had been accumulating since ancient times grew richer. The nature of the Chinese script, the use of brush and of rolls of silk and paper for writing furthered the growth of painting. Chinese architecture, which scholars say is based on their conception of the Buddhist *stupa*, can be studied in the many pagodas which they built. The spread of Buddhism gave a great impetus to sculpture.

Buddhism at one time had become so widespread as to be the main religion of China. However, with the revival of Confucianism, Buddhism gradually became less popular. Taoism and especially ancestor worship continued to hold sway over people's lives.

JAPAN

Political Developments

In the history of Asia, Japan occupies a unique position. Japan was able to escape from European imperialist conquest and was the first country in Asia to take to the path of modern industrial development. Having escaped imperialist domination, Japan herself became an imperialist country. You will read about these developments later.

The historical development of Japan has many unique features. The country consists of hundreds of small islands of which four are major islands—Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. The Japanese islands are separated from the Asian mainland by a distance of about 150 kilometres. While this has not obstructed contacts between Japan and its neighbours, it has allowed the Japanese to live in isolation from the rest of the world for long periods of time.

Almost the entire country was unified into a single state by about the seventh century A.D. In the eighth century, Nara became the capital of the Japanese state as well as a centre of Japanese culture and civilization. Later in the same century, the capital was shifted to Kyoto and that city remained the seat of the emperors of Japan for over 1000 years. The real power, however, was in the hands of an aristocratic family. Towards the end of the twelfth century, a new political institution came into being—that of the Shogun. The Shogun or the 'General' became the commander of Japan's army and ruled Japan, while the emperor remained at his capital at Kyoto. The office of the Shogun became hereditary. Until 1867, the Shoguns were the real rulers of Japan.

The next major phase of Japan's history began early in the 17th century when Tokugawa Ieyasu became the Shogun. He was the founder of the Tokugawa dynasty. The Tokugawas established a strong state and ruled the country from Edo (modern

5.18 Tokugawa Ieyasu

Tokyo) till 1867 when the last Shogun was overthrown, the emperor was restored and Japan launched herself on the road of industrial development, modernization and expansion.

Social and Economic Conditions

The political development of Japan was closely connected with the conflicts over the possession of landed estates. In the earlier period, there were a large number of private estates which were worked upon by serfs. The lords of these estates were exempted from taxes to the central government. The state also owned large areas of land but due to the heavy burden of taxation, peasants deserted these lands. The state then distributed its land to the Samurai or the warriors, who were somewhat similar to the knights of western Europe. Thus, there emerged various land-owning groups in Japanese society. The Buddhist monasteries also owned large estates. The peasants were reduced to the status of serfs as they were bound to the land and could not abandon it. They had to part with sometimes as much as two-thirds of their produce in the from of tax and rent. Many peasant revolts are recorded in Japanese history. The Tokugawa rulers introduced state ownership of land and distributed it to about 150 lords called Daimyos. These Daimyos were kept under strict control by the Shogun but were more or less free within their domains and were allowed to maintain vast armies.

5.19 A Samurai

The Tokugawa Shoguns organized society on rigid hierarchical lines. The membership in a group was hereditary as in the case of caste system. At the top were the Samurai or the warriors. The Samurai were, however, a heterogeneous group which included the Daimyos, officials and ordinary soldiers. The Samurai in theory enjoyed many privileges but those belonging to the last category, the ordinary soldiers, were not always a privileged group. When they were without a master, their condition was miserable. Next in hierarchy came the farmers who were generally oppressed mercilessly and had to perform forced labour for the lord, besides paying taxes and rent. The third in the hierarchy were artisans and craftsmen. The last group was that of merchants. With the growth in trade and industry, the actual position of the

merchants rose in society, though in theory their status was the lowest in the hierarchy. In fact, the landlords increasingly became debtors to the merchants. As in Indian society, there were also outcastes. The social and economic system of Japan in medieval times had many common features with feudalism about which you have read before.

The development of crafts and industries resulted in the growth of many towns and cities. Growth of trade, inland and foreign, also contributed to the growth of towns and cities. Copper currency was introduced and there was an increasing use of money. The Japanese exports in this period consisted mainly of copper ore, gold and silver. Under the Tokugawas, the state took over foreign trade in its own hands. They, however, followed a policy of isolation from the world. No person was allowed to leave Japan. Foreigners were thrown out. Only a few Dutch traders were allowed to remain and carry on limited trade. These measures cut off Japan from the rest of the world almost completely.

Culture and Religion

Many aspects of Japanese life in the early period were influenced by the Chinese civilization. From very early times, Japan maintained close links with the Chinese civilization. The most lasting Chinese impact was on the Japanese script. The Japanese language is very different from the Chinese, but the Japanese script is borrowed from China. Japanese adopted this script in about A.D. 400 and added phonetic symbols to it.

The early Japanese literature also was influenced by the Chinese literature. However, gradually a distinctive Japanese literature began to develop, beginning with writing of myths, histories and poems. Women of aristocratic families were particularly notable for writing poems and novels, some of which have become very famous. The most unique contribution of medieval Japan to literature was a form of poetry called Haiku. Haiku poems are short poems of 17 syllables which use highly subtle imagery and for their proper appreciation demand a highly refined taste on the part of the reader. Closely associated with literature was the theatre called Kabuki that developed in medieval Japan. This form has deeply influenced the development of modern theatre in many parts of the world. The accomplishments of medieval Japan in various other forms of art are also very impressive. In sculpture, painting, music and dance and in crafts such as pottery, fabrics, lacquerware, the Japanese artists and craftsmen excelled. Another peculiarly Japanese art, Ikebana or 'the art of flower arrangement', which is being imitated throughout the world, also developed in the medieval period. The chief characteristic of the medieval Japanese art can be summed up in one word – elegance.

The old religion of Japan is known as Shintoism. This religion consists mainly of the worship of the forces of nature. Buddhism reached Japan early in the sixth century from China through Korea and during the course of centuries it became widespread. In certain periods it even eclipsed Shintoism. Buddhism has been an important influence in the growth of Japanese culture. Japanese scholars and priests went to China to study the Buddhist scriptures. Gradually, they developed their own distinct schools of Buddhism, the most famous of which is Zen Buddhism. This school lays great

stress on meditation rather than on the study of scriptures and observance of rituals.

The word Zen is derived from *dhyana*, the Sanskrit word for meditation. Buddhism had a deep influence on the growth of Japanese art, in the building of monasteries, temples and sculpture. Great resources were spent on the construction of huge Buddhist temples.

One of the temples built in the eighth century in Nara had a hall which was about 95 metres long, 55 metres wide and 50 metres high. The bronze image of the Buddha that is housed in this temple is about ten metres high.

Christianity reached Japan in the 16th century and within a short time many Japanese became converts to this religion. The Tokugawa rulers, who followed a policy of secluding Japan from the rest of the world, were suspicious of Christianity, and it was banned in the early 17th century. Many Christians were killed and the others were forced to abandon their faith.

The cultural achievements of the Japanese people in medieval times laid the foundations of the growth of modern Japanese culture. The social and economic system of medieval Japan, however, was based on oppression and this, combined with the policy of seclusion followed by many rulers of Japan, had many ill effects on the growth of social, economic and political institutions.

The term 'Middle Ages' does not cover a uniform period for all the countries of the world. For Europe and the western world, the Middle Ages are generally considered to be the period between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1500. In the East the Middle Ages may be said to have continued long after they had ended in the West. Throughout these years great advances were made in the arts. There was much intermingling of peoples and all cultures were enriched by this process. The Arabs, whose civilization was the most advanced in this period, made great contributions to the growth of knowledge. The spread of this knowledge to Europe was an important factor in creating the Renaissance to be discussed in the next chapter.

For India, this was a period of cultural enrichment. The forces of modernization, however, were to develop later in the East than in many parts of the West. Long after the period had ended in the West, the East was still in its 'Middle Ages'.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Explain the meaning of the terms 'ancient', 'medieval' and 'modern' as used in describing periods of time in this Chapter.
2. Which of the ancient civilization ruled over most of the territory that became the Byzantine empire in the medieval period?
3. Describe the classes in European society under the feudal system. What new class began to develop in the later years of the Middle Ages? Why?
4. How would you have spent most of your time in feudal days if you had been any of the following?
   Knight, serf, lord of the manor, freeman, monk, samurai.

5. Identify the following men:
Pope Urban II, Timur, Constantine, Al Razi, Charlemagne, Omar Khayyam, Balban, Ibn Sina, Ieyasu.

Things to do

1. Imagine yourself a 'world traveller', say, around A.D. 800, to China, Japan, western Asia, western Europe. Prepare notes you might have kept in your travel diary about people's religion, their houses, buildings, work, or other points of interest. Mention some of the things you purchased– especially in China and Arabia.
2. Make a list of new products, discoveries or improvements made by man during the medieval period. Where, or by what civilization, was each made?
3. Write a paper of 250-300 words entitled 'What the Medieval West Learned from the East'.

Things to think about and discuss

1. Why did the first centuries of medieval times in western Europe come to be known as the Dark Ages?
2. Man's interests in trade and religion have often gone hand in hand throughout history. What examples of this do you find in medieval times?
3. Why is it uncomplimentary today to call a people's society or its way of life 'feudalistic'?
4. It is said that the Church kept learning alive in medieval Europe and it also sometimes said that the Church prevented advances in learning. Cite proof of the truth of both statements.
5. When, *approximately*, did the medieval period end in the West and in the East? According to what you know about 'change in man's progress' why is it difficult to say exactly when one period of history ends and another begins?
6. Compare the social and economic system of western Europe with the systems that prevailed in India, west Asia and Japan in the medieval times. What were the similarities and dissimilarities between them ? Discuss.
7. Why did many societies in the medieval times cut themselves off from the rest of the world? What must have been, in your opinion, the effects of this on those societies?

CHAPTER 6

Beginning of the Modern Age

A NUMBER of interrelated developments took place in the period from about the fourteenth to about the seventeenth century which laid the foundations of the modern world. The dominant role in these developments was played by some countries of Europe but they had their impact on the entire world.

You read in the last chapter that towards the end of the Middle Ages many changes were going on in Europe. These changes undermined the feudal system of society, which began to disintegrate. With the disintegration of the feudal system, a new type of social system began to emerge in Europe which affected every aspect of life and marked the beginning of the modern age. One of the first developments that marked the beginning of a new era was the *Renaissance*. The term 'Renaissance' means rebirth and is used to describe the period beginning around A.D. 1300 when there was a new interest in the learning of ancient Greece and Rome. But the Renaissance was much more than that. It embraced ideas and achievements in philosophy, art, literature, religion, politics and science which had little to do with the ideas and achievements of ancient Greece and Rome.

Another interrelated development was the *Reformation*. The term 'Reformation' refers to the movement against certain practices of the Catholic Church and the authority of the Pope. The Reformation led to the rise of Protestantism and the setting up of Protestant Churches from the early 16th century and to Catholic Reformation in the late 16th century. These two developments, along with the social and economic changes that had started within the feudal society, brought about the collapse of the feudal order.

Another development which marked the beginning of the modern age in Europe was a series of 'voyages of discovery'. Helped by some remarkable inventions, daring sailors sailed for distant lands. They were financed by rulers and merchants who sponsored the costly voyages of the sea-farers for the profits that the voyages would bring. The discoveries of the sea-farers extended

man's knowledge about the world and the old maps which were both inaccurate and incomplete had to be redrawn.

There were major changes in political life which set the trend of political developments for a long time to come. Nation-states began to emerge. Strong rulers rose and subjugated feudal lords, ignored the authority of the Pope in political matters and soon succeeded in establishing kingdoms which they ruled as they pleased. The political system that developed in these kingdoms was 'absolutist' in character, with the king emerging as an absolute ruler.

The last development of which you will read in this chapter is the struggle against absolute monarchies in Europe, particularly in England which led to the overthrow of the absolute monarchy and the beheading of the king. Though the monarchy was later restored, the real political power in England passed into the hands of Parliament.

The developments described in this chapter formed the bases of the developments in the 18th and 19th centuries which were characterized by the growth of industrial capitalism, democracy and nationalism.

Disintegration of the Feudal System

You have already read about some of the changes which were taking place in European societies in the Middle Ages. The revival of trade was accompanied by the growth of towns. Old towns became larger and many new towns emerged, mainly as centres of manufacture and trade. Towns, often walled, gradually freed themselves from feudal control. They had their own governments and the townsmen elected their officials. They had their own militia and their own courts. Unlike the serfs, there were no restrictions on their movements. They could come and go as they pleased and buy and sell property. There is an old proverb which says, 'Town air makes a man free'. Towns provided asylum to serfs who escaped from feudal oppression. The towns encouraged the cultivation of cash crops needed for manufactures, and peasants received their payments in money. The peasants could now pay their dues to the lord in cash rather than by labour.

With the growth of trade, there was increasing use of money. Money had little use in feudal societies. A feudal manor was more or less self-sufficient for its needs. There was very little of buying and selling and whatever there was was done through barter. The use of money indicated far-reaching changes in economy. In feudal societies, the indicator of a man's wealth was land. Some people had wealth, particularly the Church and sometimes the nobles, in the form of gold and silver, but it was idle wealth. It could not be used to make more wealth.

With the growth of trade and manufactures, this changed, marking the beginning of the transition from feudal economy to *capitalist* economy in which wealth is used to make a profit. This is done by investing money in business, in trade and industry. The profits made are re-invested to make further profits. Such wealth or money is called 'capital'. Money, not the landed property, increasingly became the measure of a man's wealth. In feudal societies, there were three classes of people: the prayers, that is, the clergy who prayed, the soldiers or the knights who fought, and workers or the peasants who worked for both the prayers and the soldiers. With the growth of trade a new class emerged– the 'middle class'–

comprising mainly the merchants. Even though small in number, they began to play an important role in society because of the wealth they possessed.

Initially, the trade with other parts of the world was largely in luxury goods from the East and was controlled by merchants of the Italian cities of Venice, Genoa and Pisa, and of towns in southern Germany. With the great geographical discoveries of the last decade of the 15th century—the discovery of the sea-route to the East and the discovery of the Americas—the pattern of trade was changed. It was first dominated by Portugal and Spain and later by Holland and Britain.

Simultaneous with these developments,changes took place in the system of manufacturing goods. In the early medieval period, most of the non-agricultural products required by the peasants were produced in the household of the peasant and by serfs, who were skilled craftsmen, for the lord. With the growth of towns, many of these activities shifted to towns where people skilled in particular crafts organized themselves into 'guilds'. You have read about the guild system before. Each craft guild had master craftsmen, journeymen and apprentices. To learn a craft, a person joined a master as an apprentice or learner. After having learned the craft, he worked as a journeyman with the master on a wage or, if he had mastered the craft, he would himself become a master craftsman. The units of production were small, consisting of three or four people, and each unit had a shop to sell its produce. There were no inequalities within a unit or between units of the same guild. The guild system was not suited to the requirements of large scale production required by an expanding market for goods, and the system began to decline. Inequities appeared within the system. with masters refusing to let journeymen become masters and paying them low wages. With the introduction of 'the putting out system', their independence declined. The merchant, under this system, would bring the master craftsmen the raw materials, the craftsmen would work with their tools as before in their homes and the produce would be taken away by the merchant who had supplied them with raw materials. Thus, in effect, unlike before, the craftsmen did not own what they produced. They were increasingly reduced to the position of wage-earners, except that they still owned the tools used by them and worked at home.

Subsequently, this system gave way to the factory system under which the production was carried out in a building owned by the capitalist with the help of machines also owned by him. The workers, owning nothing, worked only for wages. In industries, such as mining and metal-working, the new system came into being early. The period saw tremendous expansion of manufactures. This was accompanied by a growing differentiation in towns and the emergence of working class.

During the Middle Ages, there were many peasant revolts in different parts of Europe against feudal oppression, from the 14th century onwards. It may be remembered that besides the lords, the Church also owned vast stretches of lands. The Church had, therefore, become a part of the feudal system. The revolts against feudal oppression were, therefore, directed against the Church also. The Church dominated the intellectual life of

Europe and suppressed all new ideas that deviated from the doctrines of the Church. The leaders of rebellious peasants often advocated religious doctrines which were at variance with those of the Church, and they were condemned as heretics.

As a result of these developments, the feudal system broke down. The towns which were free from the control of the lords began to undermine the stability of the feudal society. In course of time, towns became very prosperous. Kings who were quite powerless in the feudal system began to take the help and support of townsmen to increase their power and to enforce their will over the lords. The kings also started having their own armies and thus freed themselves from their earlier dependence on the lords for soldiers.

Thus, feudalism began to decline although it was finally ended in most countries only in the 18th and 19th centuries. In its place, a new system of society began to emerge. Many of the other developments about which you will read in the chapter were also related to this process.

RENAISSANCE

The term 'Renaissance literally means rebirth and is, in a narrow sense, used to describe the revival of interest in the learning of the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome. This revival first began in Italy when a number of scholars from Constantinople migrated to Italy and a number of Italian scholars went to Constantinople and other cities of the old Byzantine empire in search of Greek classics. As a result, hundreds of classical writings, unknown to Europeans for centuries, were circulating first in Italy and then other parts of Europe. The interest in classical learning and in other achievements of the civilizations of Greece and Rome deeply influenced Europeans. The Renaissance, however, was not, as mentioned earlier, a mere revival of ancient learning and knowledge of the achievements of ancient Greece and Rome. It was marked by a series of new developements in the field of art, literature, religion, philosophy, science and politics.

The Renaissance began in Italy. A very important reason for this was that the revival of trade between Europe and the East had brought the greatest prosperity to Italian cities which virtually controlled this trade. Italy was divided into a number of small states. By early 16th century, there were five main states which controlled most of Italy—Milan, Venice, Florence, Naples and the States of the Church. The Italian cities had grown up in an atmosphere of freedom from feudal control. Freedom encouraged thinking and a spirit of adventure. The rulers of the Italian states were patrons of learning and the arts.

The intellectual and cultural life of Europe for centuries had been dominated by the Catholic Church. The Renaissance undermined this domination. The revival of pre-Christian classical learning and of interest in the cultural achievements of ancient Greece and Rome were, in themselves, also an important factor in undermining the domination of the Church.

Humanism

The chief characteristic of the Renaissance way of thinking was *humanism*. It was the heart and soul of the Renaissance. Basically, it meant a decisive

shift in concern for human as distinct, from divine matters. Humanism was a system of views which extolled man, stressed his essential worth and dignity, expressed deep faith in his tremendous creative potential, and proclaimed freedom of the individual and inalienable rights of the individual. It was centred on the man of flesh and blood with all his earthly joys and sorrows, oppossed to religious asceticism and defended his right to pleasure and the satisfaction of earthly desires and requirements. It meant the glorification of the human and the natural as opposed to the divine and other-worldly. The humanists rejected and even ridiculed religious asceticism, mortification of the flesh and withdrawal from the world. They urged man to seek joy on this earth rather than in an after-life which the Church advocated. Their works were permeated with the faith that a man with an active mind and body was capable of knowing and controlling the world, of performing miracles and fashioning his own happiness. The proper study of Mankind, it was asserted, is Man, Humanity rather than Divinity.

Pico della Mirandola, an Italian humanist of the 15th century, who had travelled widely and had studied various systems of philosophy, published a list of nine hundred theses. In his writings, he expressed the Renaissance belief in the limitless potentialities of man. He wrote, "'There is nothing more wonderful than man'. This is what I have read in some records of the Arabians. A famous Greek said,' A great miracle is man'. What is the reason behind these sayings? Humans are the kings of all beings below God and the angels because of the ability of their reason and the light of their intelligence. But these reasons are not enough. Man is the most fortunate of creatures. Why? Because of all creatures, God did not limit the potential of man. Only humans have freedom of choice and can fashion themselves in whatever shape they prefer." The Renaissance men hungered after more knowledge. They came to feel that human life is important, that man is worthy of study and respect, that there should be efforts to improve life on this earth. Because of this interest in human affairs, the study of literature and history became major areas of study. Literature and history came to be called the 'humanities', which were primarily concerned with understanding the affairs of man in his earthly life, not with life after death.

This new spirit of humanism also found expression in the new art and literature. The Renaissance artists took their subjects from the Bible but portrayed the human form in all its earthly beauty and vigour. The Renaissance writers were also chiefly concerned with man. As Shakespeare wrote:

> What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals !....
>
> *Hamlet*, Act II, scene ii

Art and Architecture

Some of the greatest achievements of the Renaissance were made in the realm of painting, sculpture and architecture. The humanism of the Renaissance found brilliant expression in these art forms. The Renaissance artists made use of biblical subjects but the interpretation that they

gave these subjects had little to do with the traditional religious attitude. Art as an independent activity assumed a status which was unknown in medieval times. The purpose of the medieval art was to express moral values and impart religious teachings. The people protrayed were not men and women of flesh and blood. The artists, mostly anonymous, had a low position in society. They worked in groups as craftsmen and had no individuality. The Renaissance marked the rise of artists, each with his unique individuality and style, who enjoyed great prestige in society.

Of all the art forms, the Renaissance's supreme achievements was in painting. The Renaissance artists looked upon art as an imitation of life. This required close observation of nature and of man, of mountains, trees and animals and of the anatomy of man. The artists studied optics and geometry and used their knowledge to develop perspective in their paintings. They studied human anatomy to find the mechanism underlying gestures and expressions. Leonardo da Vinci, one of the greatest geniuses of all time, studied not only the anatomical structure of the human body but also, in

6.1 Leonardo da Vinci's
The Last Supper

order to represent movement, the way different parts of the body shaped when in a state of movement.

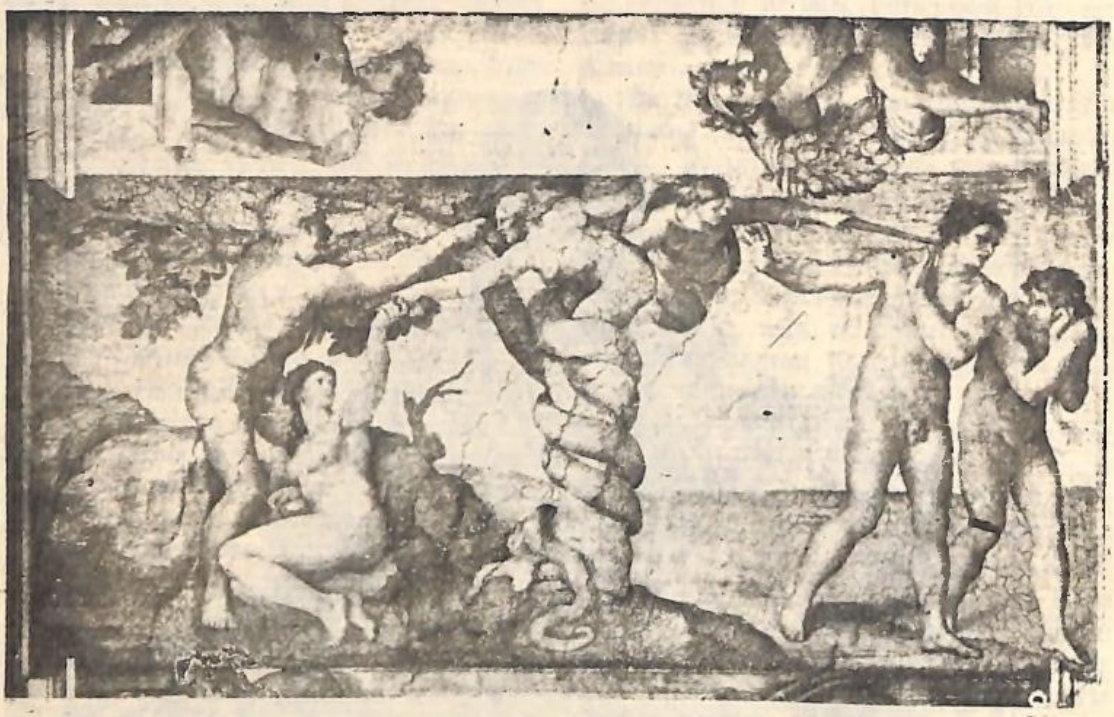
Deriving pleasures of the senses from art was recognized as a legitimate purpose of art. In the Renaissance view, the world was a place of beauty and delight. The artists concentrated their attention on the physical aspects of man's existence rather than that of the religious. The depiction of Mary and Christ as a child, which was a very popular theme, depicted Mary and Jesus as loving human beings and not as religious symbols. In the physical world, the artists saw a revelation of beauty and harmony and, seeking perfection in their creations, they painted human figures more beautiful than any creation of nature, a 'new race of man', as they have been called. In the works of the Renaissance artists, perfection was no longer exclusively divine. It was also human.

6.2 Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*

The Renaissance spirit found its full flowering in Italy in the works of three great artists—Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. They were commissioned to produce works of art by Popes and members of the Medici family. Leonardo da Vinci was gifted with many talents. He was a painter, sculptor, engineer, scientist, philosopher, poet, and singer. He even designed an airplane! He has left behind innumerable sketches that illustrate his inventive genius. He is best known for two paintings *The Last Supper* and *Mona Lisa*. Michelangelo's talent as a sculptor rivalled even that of the ancient Greeks. He was also outstanding as a painter and architect. His greatest work in painting was the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. He decorated the ceiling in nine panels, drawing the subjects from Christian mythology but giving it an intense human interpretation. These paintings, for example, *The Last Judgement* and *The Fall of Man*, are among the most famous works of art in the world. Raphael, another Italian painter, lived about the same time as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. He is famous for his paintings of the Madonna, the mother of Jesus Christ, and is recognized as one of the world's master painters.

All the early Renaissance artists pictured Christian subjects and covered the walls of churches and palaces with scenes of heaven, hell, and the Last Judgement. Later artists were influenced by the revival of interest in old Greek and Roman mythology and painted themes from Christian literature in Greco-Roman

6.3 Michelangelo's *Pieta* (a representation of Mary with the dead Christ across her knees)



6.4 Michelangelo's *The Fall of Man*

style. Many non-religious themes were also depicted. But whatever the subject, its portrayal was humanist.

The sculpture of the Ranaissance period underwent broadly the same development as painting. The medieval sculpture comprised mainly images of saints and depiction of religious themes as a part of architecture. One of the significant developments now was the emergence of the free-standing sculpture, that is, sculptures not directly carved on the wall surface as a part of the building. They stood apart from the building as separate and independent works of art. As in the case of painting, the growing knowledge of anatomy and the new standards of beauty influenced the development of sculpture.

The Renaissance period also marks the beginning of the decline of Gothic architecture which had dominated the architecture of cathedrals and churches from the 12th and 13th centuries. The basic features of this architecture were rib-vaults, sharply pointed arches and buttresses. The Gothic structures had lofty spires. They had stained-glass windows and carved facades and were decorated with representations of mythical creatures. The Ranaissance architects considered Gothic architecture as ascetic and other-worldly and used the word 'Gothic' to disparage it as something barbarian. New styles of architecture were developing, first in Italy and later in other

parts of Europe. These were based on the study of the ancient Roman architecture. The finest specimen of the new style was St. Peter's Church in Rome, the building of which was started by Bramante and continued by Michelangelo. The buildings in the new style, many of which were churches, have been described as expressing ideals which were purely secular, ideals of 'joy in this life and pride in human achievement'.

Renaissance Literature

The most significant feature of the impact of Renaissance on literature was the use of the languages spoken by the people of a region or country in literary writings. Until about the 14th century, there were hardly any writings in any of the languages that are spoken by the people of different countries of Europe—Italian, Spanish, French, German, English, etc. The language of scholarship and literature for centuries had been Latin which only the educated, who constituted a very small part of the population, could understand. The Renaissance marks the emergence of modern European languages as languages of literature and that was the beginning of the development of these languages. In a short period, these languages almost completely replaced Latin as the language of poetry, drama and fiction. Latin continued, however, to be the language of philosophy and science for some more time. The Renaissance writers had a mastery over Latin and the other classical European language, Greek. But they chose to write in their local languages. This development was closely related to the rise of national consciousness in different countries of Europe.

The first significant work in a modern European language was Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Dante wrote much in Latin, but he preferred to write in the language of his own state, Tuscan, which later became the Italian language. The *Divine Comedy* is one of the greatest works of Italian literature. Petrarch, an equally great writer, followed Dante. Historians consider him the founder of humanism. Like Dante, he also wrote poetry in Italian language. Many of the Renaissance writings dealt with other subjects besides religion, and became famed as masterpieces in their time and have remained classics ever since.

Of the Renaissance scholars in northern Europe, an outstanding Dutch writer of that time was Erasmus, who ridiculed corrupt practices in the Church. Another was the English author, Thomas More, who pictured an ideal society in his book *Utopia*. Machiavelli, a historian of Florence, is the father of modern political

6.5 Erasmus

philosophy. His book *The Prince* was concerned with the new concept of 'state' as it was emerging in Europe, and the art of governing successfully. Machiavelli thought of a state as being independent and supreme, and one in which political matters are separated from religion. *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, a Spaniard, made fun of medieval knights and their ideas of chivalry. The essays of Francis Bacon, an English scholar, are full of wisdom on many subjects. The works of English poet and dramatist, Willian Shakespeare, deal with every possible human emotion of man, his strengths and weaknesses. For this reason, Shakespeare's plays are almost as modern today as they were when first staged, in the 16th century. Rebelais, the French writer, who was educated in theology and medicine, was thoroughly in tune with the spirit of the Renaissance. His wit and satire were directed against popular beliefs in astrology and superstition. His great works are *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua*, named after two mythical medieval giants.

The works of all these writers show how the Renaissance spirit was focussing genuine interest on the affairs of man.

6.6 Frontispiece of an old edition of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*

The Invention of Printing

The invention of the printing press encouraged interest in the writing of books and in reading. Credit for this invention, which was made in the first half of the 15th century, goes to Gutenberg and Caster. Printing made books available to more people. It may be remembered that the total number of books available in Europe till the late 15th century was very small. The first 'printed' book, the Gutenberg Bible, was brought out in 1456. Until the invention of printing, books were manuscripts, that is, hand written. They were copied in hand by scribes and were mostly available in the libraries of monasteries. Even people who could read had thus very little access to books. But most people could neither read nor write. It has been estimated that during the first half of 15th century, there were only about 100,000 manuscripts in Europe. In fifty years' time, after the introduction of the printing press, there were nine million books. This was a significant development

6.7 A printing house of the 16th century

but its impact took a long time to be felt. The printed books were also expensive and only the rich people could afford to buy them. The vast majority of the people remained, in any case, illiterate. The number of people who could read and write (mostly the people belonging to the middle class) had certainly gone up and the new literature deeply influenced their attitude to life.

Beginning of Modern Science

The Renaissance marked the beginning of modern science. As has been stated earlier, the intellectual life in medieval Europe was dominated by the Church. According to the medieval European way of thinking, any view to be held true must be supported by the authority of the scriptures, of the Church, or of ancient philosophers *whose views had been accepted by the Church.* The Renaissance thinkers rejected the blind acceptance of authority. They asserted that knowledge could be gained 'by going out and studying mentally and manually the Book of Nature', and not by speculation. This new outlook marked a break with the past and prepared the way for the advancement of science. It was summed up by Francis Bacon, an English philosopher, who said that knowledge can be gained only by observation and experimentation. According to Bacon, he who seeks knowledge should *first look at things that happen in the world around him.* He should then ask himself *what causes these things to happen* and, after he has formed a theory or belief, as to the possible cause, he should experiment. *The experiment is to test his belief* and see whether the assumed cause does, in fact, produce the result he has observed. Bacon believed

6.8 Copernicus

that the 'true and lawful end of the sciences is that human life be enriched by new discoveries and powers.'

One of the first achievements of the Renaissance in science was in astronomy. This was an exposition by Copernicus, of the rotation of the earth on its axis and its motion around the sun. Copernicus was a Polish scholar who lived in Italy for many years. This was an important break with the ancient system of thought. For over a thousand years, it was believed that the earth was the centre of the universe. It was one of the basic dogmas of the philosophers of the time. Its refutation was an attack on the conception of the universe held by the Church. This was, therefore, condemned as a heresy. Copernicus' book *On the Revolution of the Celestial Orbs* was published in 1543, the

6.9 Galileo, from the frontispiece of one of his books

year in which he died. He had hesitated from publishing it for fear of the hostility of the Church. While the theory awaited final confirmation by Galileo later, the very idea of an open universe of which the earth was but a small part shattered the earlier view of a closed universe created and maintained in motion by God. About half

6.10 Title page of Vesalius book *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, published in 1543

a century after the publication of Copernicus' book, in 1600, Giordano Bruno was burnt at the stake on the charge of heresy. He had advocated ideas which were based on Copernicus' view of the universe.

The decisive proof of the new conception of the universe was made possible by the invention of the telescope which has been called the greatest scientific instrument of the age. Galileo, born eleven years after the death of Copernicus, used this instrument in his study of the heavenly bodies and Copernicus' theory was confirmed by Galileo's observations. Galileo was tried by the Church in his old age and was condemned and forced to recant his views. He was awarded nominal inprisonment and allowed to carry on his scientific work which was not directly connected with astronomy. Galileo's trial marked the end of a period in the history of science. The condemnation of Galileo was not a popular one and attempts to enforce the acceptance of the old views of the universe were quietly dropped.

Another scientist, Kepler from Germany, explained with the help of mathematics how planets move around the sun. He set down the principle, or law, which governs these movements and described their path. Isaac Newton continued the work started by Kepler. Again, with the help of mathematics, Newton proved that all the heavenly bodies move according to the law of gravitation.

The modern age of science that began with these Renaissance scientists not only increased man's knowledge but also established a method of study that could be applied to other branches of knowledge. Significant discoveries, for example were made in the study of the human body and circulation of the blood which helped to fight many superstitions. In 1543, the year in which Copenicus' book was published, Vesalius, a Belgian, published his profusely illustrated *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*. Based on his study of the dissections of the human body, this book provided the first complete description of the anatomy of the human body. Servetus, a Spaniard, published a book explaining the circulation of blood. He was condemned to death for questioning the Church belief in Trinity. A complete account of the constant process of circulation of blood, from the heart to all parts of the body and back to the heart was given by Harvey, an Englishman, in about 1610. This knowledge helped to correct many errors of the past and started a new approach to the study of the problems of health and disease.

The knowledge gained by the new discoveries did not become immediately widespread although the printing press greatly helped the dissemination of ideas. It took a long time before the new discoveries became widely known and began to be applied. In arithmetic, for example, the Arabic numerals, borrowed by the Arabs from India, had reached Europe in the 13th century. However, for a long time, the voyagers continued to use the Roman numerals in their books. With the growth in the volume of trade and commerce, the Arabic numerals simplified the keeping of accounts. Their use was, of course, of very great importance in the development of mathematics.

It is important to remember that what the Renaissance scientists began learning by questioning, observation, and experimentation is the method that scientists continue to use even today. This is the scientific method. It is by applying this method that our knowledge

has grown so greatly.

REFORMATION

The term 'Reformation' refers to two major developments in the history of Europe towards the later part of the Renaissance. The first was the Protestant Reformation which resulted in a split in Christianity and the secession of a large number of countries from the Roman Catholic Church and establishment of separate Churches in those countries, generally on national lines. The second development concerned reforms within the Roman Catholic Church, generally referred to as Catholic Reformation or Counter Reformation. But Reformation was not merely a religious movement. It was intimately connected with, and was in fact a part of, the social and political movements of the period which brought about the end of the medieval period and the emergence of the modern world.

The Catholic Church, during the early medieval period, had become a vast hierarchical organization headed by the Pope in Rome. The Pope was the supreme authority over the entire hierarchy and he exercised this authority directly. The position of the Pope is often described by the phrase 'papal monarchy'. Systematic efforts were made to extend the authority of the Church over everyone, high or low. Making an oral confession of his sins to a priest at least once a year and suffering the punishment imposed was made obligatory for everyone. The people who did not follow this were excommunicated. An excommunicated person was supposed to have been temporarily consigned to hell. If he died, his body could not be buried with the prescribed rituals. Other Christians were forbidden from associating with him.

An important component of the religious thinking propagated by the Church was the theory of sacraments. A sacrament was defined as an instrument by which divine grace is communicated to men. The sacraments were regarded indispensable for securing God's grace and there was no salvation without them. Another was the theory of priesthood. It was held that the priest who was ordained by a bishop (who was confirmed by the Pope) was the inheritor of a part of the authority conferred by Christ on Peter. The priest, according to this theory, had the power to co-operate with God in performing certain miracles and in releasing sinners from the consequences of their sins. Besides the sacraments, various other beliefs came to be accepted. About such beliefs Erasmus wrote in his *Praise of Folly*, "To this same class of fools belong those who beguile themselves with the silly but pleasing notion that if they look upon a picture or image of St. Christopher... they will not die that day, or that he who salutes an image of St. Barbara with the proper form of address will come back from the battle safe; or that one who approaches St. Erasmus on certain days with wax candles and prayers will soon be rich... each saint has his office allotted to him, and is addressed each in his special way; this one is called upon to alleviate toothache; that, to aid in childbirth; others to restore a stolen article... or protect cattle...."

Evils of the Catholic Church

Reformation is often described as a revolt against abuses which had grown in the Catholic Church. Some of the priests and higher-ups in the Church hierarchy received their appointments through

corrupt means. Many such appointees were utterly ignorant. They led lives of luxury and immorality. Religious offices were sold to the highest bidder and those who bought positions after spending money made good by taking high fees for the services they performed. The Popes and the higher clergy lived like princes. A new abuse was the sale of letters which remitted punishments of the sinners who bought them, both in this life and after their death in purgatory. Normally, the priests imposed a penance or punishment on a person who had sinned and he was required to perform a special service or make a pilgrimage to a holy place. But increasingly sinners with enough money could be freed from doing penance for their sins by paying the clergy for a 'Letter of Indulgence'. The sale of indulgences which began to be considered as passports to heaven became one of the major immediate issues which caused the Protestant Reformation.

Any opinion or doctrine contrary to the Church dogma was considered heretical and was punished. The Church had established a vast machine to suppress heresy. Inquisition or a tribunal had been instituted for the discovery and punishment of heresy. Any deviation and dissent from the dogma and protest against the abuses of the Church was suppressed and heretics began to be burnt at the stake. You have already read about the burning of Bruno and Servetus. The inquisitor, who wore black garments and a black cowl over the head, would enter a village or town with his staff and summon the inhabitants to report any heretic or any person they suspected of heresy. Besides other punishments such as execution by burning at the stake, the property of the heretics was confiscated and distributed among the informer, the inquisitor and the Church.

Besides the sale of indulgences, one could now gain salvation in exchange for fees. The priests, the bishops and the wandering monks could pronounce a marriage lawful or unlawful. By payment of fees, the problem could be solved. There were fees for every transaction in life, from birth to death, fees for the peace of the soul and fees for the souls of the people dead long ago. The wandering monks carried portable altars which they set up when they wanted to, heard confessions, awarded punishments for sins and remitted the punishments for fees.

Protests against the Church

From the 14th century, opposition to some of the Church practices and doctrines began to grow. The language of the Catholic Church was Latin which the common people did not understand. The scriptures were not available in any of the modern European languages. Latin, Hebrew and Greek were considered sacred languages. Translation of the scriptures into any other language, it was believed, would destroy the sanctity of the text. However, Wycliffe asserted that if the scriptures were the only source of the faith and of the true Christianity, and contained the only standard of righteousness, then the salvation of the people lay in their knowing what the scriptures said. For this it was necessary that they were translated into the languages of the people. Wycliffe was the inspirer and sponsor of the first English translation of the Bible. He recruited what were known as Poor Preachers to spread the knowledge of the scriptures among the common people. After his death in 1384, some of his followers went even beyond his

ideas and condemned many Church doctrines and practices. In one of their writings, it is said, "We think truly that the holy water used in Church would be the best medicine for all kinds of illnesses—sores, for instance; whereas we experience the contrary every day." In 1401, Parliament of England passed a law,'On the Desirability of Burning Heretics'. Thirty-four years after his death, Wycliffe was found guilty of heresy. His bones were taken out of the grave, burnt and the ashes thrown into the river. In 1526, Tyndale smuggled into England printed copies of his own English rendering of the Bible. He was arrested and executed.

The teachings of Wycliffe were spread outside England by his students. One of them, John Huss from Czechoslovakia, was found guilty of heresy and burnt at the stake in 1415. There was a powerful uprising in his country after his execution which led to the establishment of a republic for a few years.

Martin Luther and Protestant Reformation

The Protestant Revolution can be said to have begun in 1517 when Martin Luther, a monk of the Order of St. Augustine, nailed his ninety-five theses or statements which attacked the sale of indulgences, on the door of the Church in Wittenberg in Germany. He challenged people to come and hold debates with him on his theses and sent copies of his theses to his friends in a number of cities.

During the next two years, Luther wrote a series of pamphlets. He knew that his doctrines could not be reconciled with those of the Catholic Church and that he had no alternative but to break with the Catholic Church. In 1520, the Pope ordered him to recant within sixty days or

6.11 Martin Luther

be condemned as a heretic. Luther burnt the proclamation of the Pope in public. During this period, he was protected by the ruler of Saxony who was his friend. Many rulers in Germany were hostile to the Church and when Luther was excommunicated, he remained unharmed. During the next 25 years, he occupied himself with the task of building an independent German Church, and in expounding his doctrine. He rejected the entire system of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, introduced German as the language of Church services, abolished the special status of priests as representatives of God on earth, eliminated most of the sacraments, and emphasized faith rather than pilgrimages. He gave the highest priority to the supreme authority of the scriptures. Another important change was the abandonment of the view of the Catholic Church that the church was supreme over

6.12 An allegorical representation of Reformation. Martin Luther is condemning the high authorities of the church to hell.

the state.

The German rulers and common people of Germany supported Luther. There were political reasons for the support of the rulers. They wanted to be free from the authority of Popes and get possession of the wealth in German monasteries for themselves. The common people liked Luther's teaching because it gave them an opportunity to demand more freedom from their rulers. The break with the Catholic Church was followed by a peasant revolt. Luther sided with the rulers and the lords in suppressing the peasants' revolt. He advocated the hunting down of rebels. Among the rebels were people belonging to a sect called the Anabaptists who are considered the most radical reformers of the time. They advocated complete separation of the Church from the state, and denied the necessity of the priests, denounced the accumulation of wealth and distinctions of rank, and considered it the duty of Christians to share their things in common.

Political Factors

While discussing the background of the Protestant Reformation, we have referred mainly to conflicts over religious doctrines and practices and their abuses by the Church. While the importance of these factors should not be under-estimated, they need to be seen in the context of the political and economic developments in the period. This was a period when, in different countries of Europe, there was a rise of national consciousness among the people. There was a growing consciousness among the people of every

country that they were distinct from the others and must not be ruled over by others who were foreigners, and that they should have their own government and ruler, independent of any outside control. Unlike in the medieval period, states were beginning to be formed on the basis of this national consciousness. The social and economic changes that had taken place, for example, the growing importance of merchants, had strengthened this process. The Roman Catholic Church asserted its supremacy over all people in all matters, including in the matter of appointment and deposition of kings. Thus, there was a basic antagonism between the growing national consciousness and the Church. There could be no growth in nationalism without a decrease in the power of the Church.

The rise of states based on national consciousness was accompanied by the rise of absolutism or despotism. The rulers of states claimed total supremacy within their realms. They even claimed that their right to rule was a divine right. These rulers wanted complete authority not only over worldly affairs (which right the Popes also claimed) but also control over the Churches and the priesthood within their kingdoms.

There were also various economic factors. The churches and the monasteries under control of the Popes had enormous wealth and owned vast stretches of lands. The Church imposed various kinds of taxes, for example Peter's Pence and the *tithe*. Most of these taxes, collected from different countries of Europe, reached Rome. Similarly, the proceeds from the sales of indulgences were sent to Rome. While the common people disliked that a large portion of their wealth should be sent to Rome, their rulers saw the opportunity of increasing their wealth by confiscating Church properties. The Church properties were exempt from taxes and, therefore, the burden of taxation within a state fell on the merchants and the new class of capitalists who was rising. While religious differences perhaps could have been sorted out, but these antagonisms between the Church and the state could not be reconciled. The Protestant Reformation did not, nor was it meant to, lead to the establishment of a universal Protestant Church under a single authority like the Catholic Church was under the Popes. It led to the establishment of separate national Churches under the control of the state.

Spread of Protestant Reformation

After the success of Luther in Germany, the Protestant Reformation spread to many other countries. The doctrines of the Protestants everywhere were not the same. In Switzerland, the Protestant Reformation was led by Zwingli and John Calvin. In fact, Calvin's ideas gained much more support in different parts of Europe than those of Luther. Calvin was opposed to gaiety in any form, even to colour. Among Calvinists there were, however, many distinguished scholars and men of strong character. Religious sects similar to the Calvinists were called Puritans in England and America, Presbyterians in Scotland and Huguenots in France. In the Scandinavian countries– Denmark, Norway and Sweden– the rulers accepted Luther's religion and the Protestant Lutheran Church became the official church in the Scandinavian countries.

In England, Henry VIII declared himself the head of the Church when the Pope would not give him permission to divorce

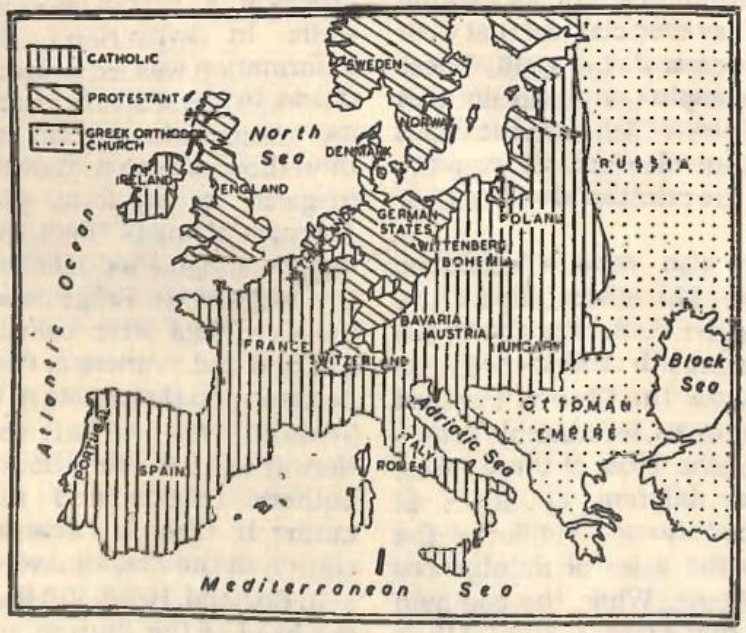
his wife, Catherine. Henry VIII's reign was followed by a long conflict between Catholics and Protestants. In 1559, Queen Elizabeth I established the Church of England as the official church. Religious conflicts continued to rock England and the continent for another century. But by the 17th century, half of Europe had adopted one or the other of the Protestant creeds.

Catholic Reformation

The Protestant Reformation was followed by a realization by the Catholics, including the Popes, the priests, the Catholic rulers and scholars, that the spread of Protestantism could not be checked by persecution or by political and military means. What was needed was a moral regeneration of the Catholic Church and the Papacy. A series of measures were taken to introduce reforms in the Catholic Church. The period in which Catholic Church officials attempted reform and worked to bring back to the Church some of its lost power is known as the *Counter Reformation* or the *Catholic Reformation*. In Spain, where there were no Protestants, a soldier named Loyola started an organization for clergymen to work wholly as 'soldiers of Jesus' in the service of the Church. Its members came to be called Jesuits. They went from place to place and won back followers in France and Germany. They established missions in India, China, Africa, and the Americas to gain new adherents. The Jesuit schools which they started to strengthen the Roman Catholic Church are still in existence in many countries of the world.

Conflicts in the Name of Religion

The Reformation brought about a split in Western Christendom and, along with it, for a long time an increase in religious



Religious situation in Europe in about 1600

6.13 A woodcut showing the burning of witches in 1555

conflicts and wars. The hatred that developed between Protestants and Catholics during and following the Reformation knew no bounds. In a period of about 25 years from 1560's, eight religious wars ravaged France. Cruel persecutions and wars resulted, encouraged by fanatics with no regards for the teaching of Jesus Christ. In the Netherlands, thousands of followers of Calvin were burnt or hanged. Religious persecution in England drove Puritans to North America where their colonies helped to lay the foundation of the United States. It brought about the Civil War in England and the execution of King Charles I. The period from 1560 to 1630 was the worst period in the history of witch-hunting. It assumed the proportions of a craze. Innocent women were caught, accused of being witches and burnt.

EXPLORATION, DISCOVERY, TRADE

The same spirit of curiosity that led some of Europe's Renaissance men to effect new developments in art, literature, science, and religion led others to adventure and the discovery of new lands. The main motivation behind these adeventures was the profits that trade with the East would bring. After his first voyage to India, for example, Vasco Da Gama found that the price of pepper in Calicut was one- twenty sixth of the price prevailing in Venice. The prospects of huge profits made governments and financiers undertake the organization of voyages on a scale that was unimaginable before.

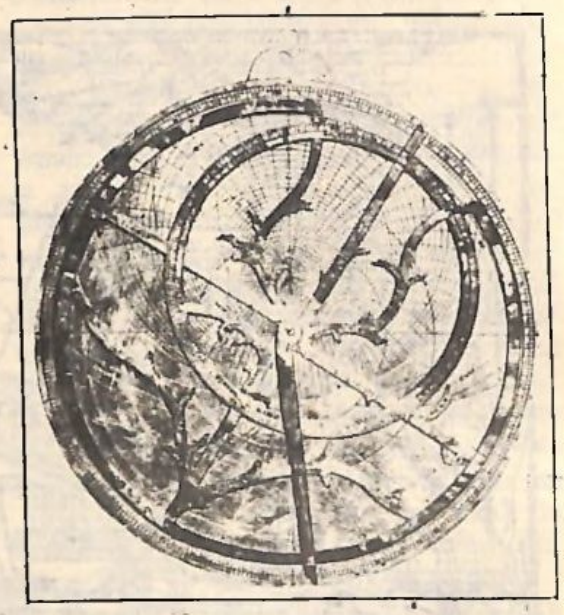
The world of the Greeks and the Romans was the territory around the Mediterranean Sea. In the 13th century, Marco Polo travelled from Venice to China

and Japan. His description of the East after his return had become popular reading. From his writings the Europeans learned about the rich cities of China, the golden towers of Japan, the pagodas of Burma and Thailand (Siam), the spices of the East Indies, and the luxuries of India.

After the Crusades, the Europeans became increasingly interested in the East, largely through the stories brought back by travellers and traders by way of Constantinople. The prosperity of the Italian cities that had grown rich from their trade with eastern countries aroused the envy of the other European nations; they longed to have a share in the trade. The trade, especially in spices, was very profitable. But after 1453, the Turks cut off this trade through Asia Minor and if the Europeans were to continue to have spices, these products had to be brought by a different route. Finding new routes was a challenge to the adventurous sailors of the Renaissance.

Until the later part of the fifteenth century, a large part of the world was unknown to the people living in any area of the world. The existence of the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and large parts of Africa and Asia was unknown to people living outside these areas. The vast Atlantic Ocean had remained uncharted and the possibility of the existence of a vast landmass on the other side of the Atlantic was rarely imagined. It was known that one could circumnavigate or sail around Africa, though many people did not rule out the possibility that the sailors might sail on for ever on an endless ocean or they might fall down from the earth when they reached its end.

The first great steps in the exploration of the earth were taken by the sailors



6.14 An Arab astrolabe of the 12th century

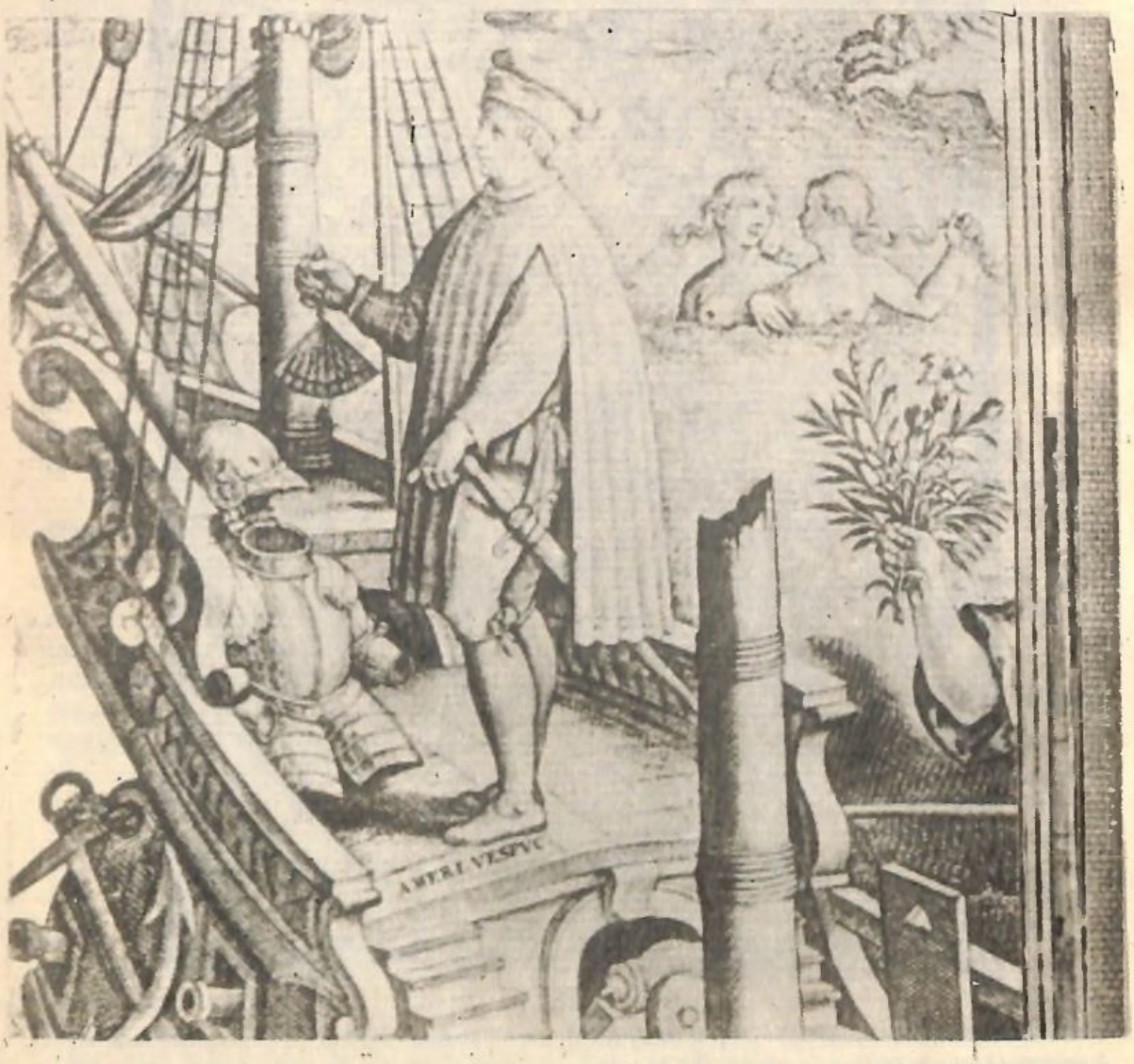
under the patronage of Portuguese and Spanish rulers. The compass and the astrolabe, the essential navigational instruments for long journeys across the oceans, had become known and astronomical tables and the art of mapping, essential for sailors, had been developing fast.

Great Explorations : 1492–1520

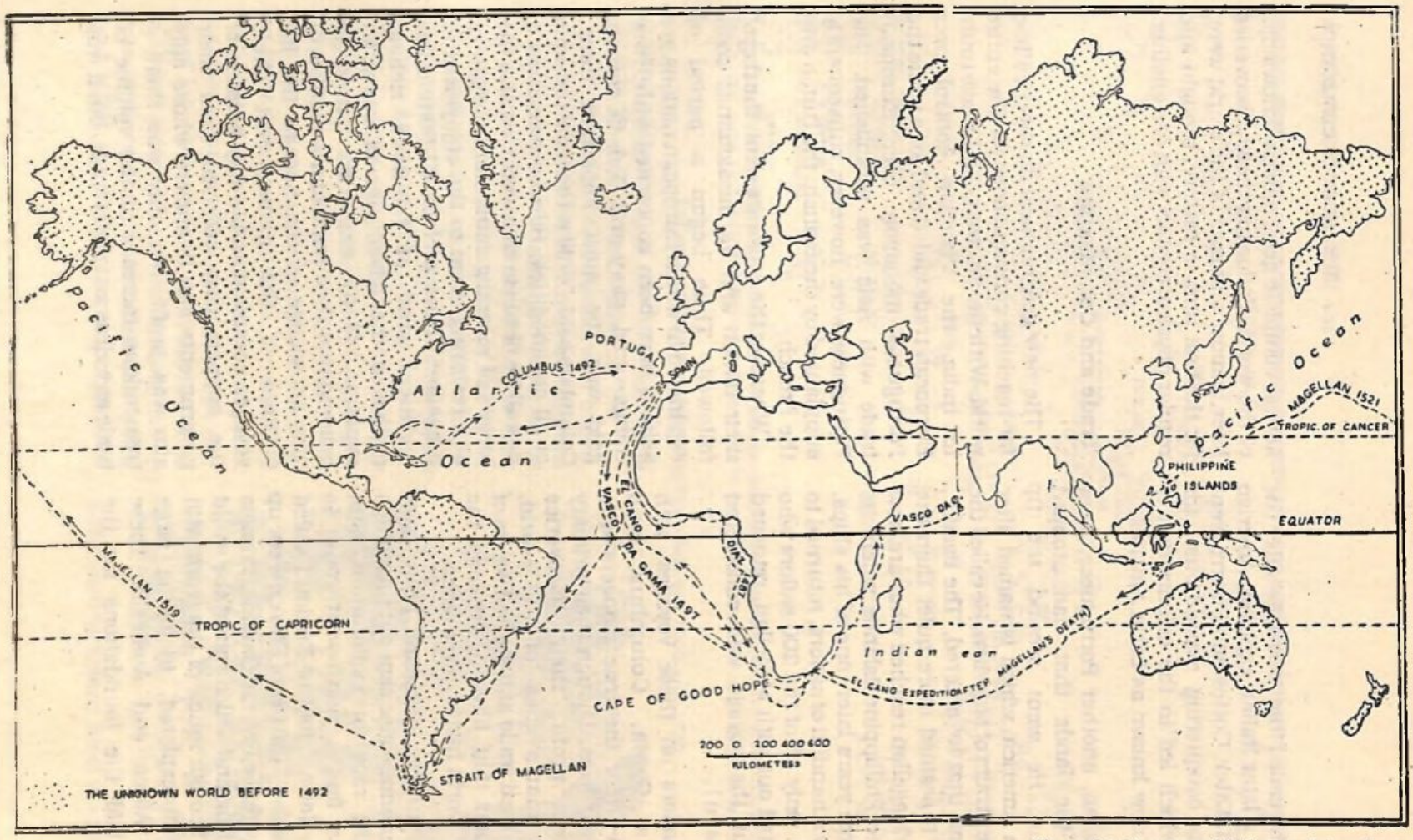
Prince Henry, the Navigator of Portugal, encouraged sailors by making maps based on trips to the African coast. One man, Bartholomew Diaz, had reached the point which the Portuguese named Cape of Good Hope. Then Vasco da Gama followed this route and sailed on, round the Cape and reached Calicut in India, in 1498. When he returned to Portugal with a cargo of spices, worth sixty times the cost of the trip, the king received his with great honour.

6.15 Columbus and members of his crew trading with the inhabitants of Haiti where they had landed during Columbus's first voyage across the Atlantic

Columbus, an Italian sailor, believed that sailing west approximately 6000 km across the Atlantic Ocean would bring him to India. His trip was financed by Spain from where he sailed in 1492. When he reached land after a few weeks, he thought he had reached India; so he called the islands, 'the Indies', and the people who lived there 'Indians'. Till his death, even after three more successful voyages, Columbus remained ignorant of his great discovery. Of course, he returned with no spices. The world came to know later that Columbus had reached islands near the vast landmass completely unknown to the people elsewhere. These lands were



6.16 Amerigo Vespucci during one of his voyages



The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Maritime Explorations and Discoveries

soon to be called 'the Americas' after the name of a later Italian explorer, Amerigo Vespucci. Later, Cortes and Pizarro went there on conquering expeditions for Spain, which led to the colonization of what is now known as Latin America.

Magellan, another Portuguese, went beyond the lands that had stopped Columbus. He went around the tip of South America, which is named after him—the Straits of Magellan. He called the new ocean that he entered, 'The Pacific', because it seemed more quiet than the Atlantic. Magellan reached what are now called the Phillippine Islands where he died. Three years later, one of his ships, with only a handful of sailors, returned to Portugal. Only 18 of the 200 sailors who had started out with Magellan, returned alive. But the voyage was considered successful.

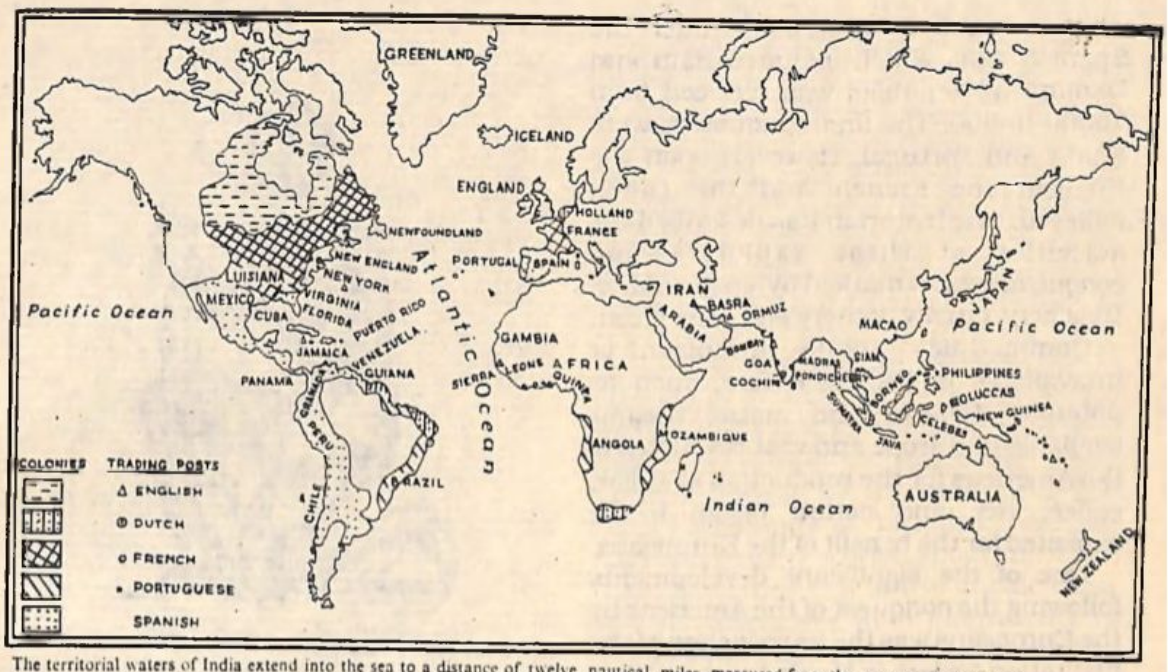
The sailors on these voyages—with Vasco a Gama, Columbus, and Magellan—were the true pioneers who staked their lives. Though their primary object was profit, their discoveries changed man's idea of the world, revolutionized trade and started waves of colonization that have determined the course of world history ever since.

Other countries—England, France and the Netherlands—also sent out their ships to join the race for explorations. Still hoping to find a north-west route to the East, John Cabot of England sailed west to Canada. Cartier of France went up the St. Lawrence River in Canada. Francis Drake of England sailed round the world in 1577. Though much of the world still remained unexplored, including large parts of Africa and Australia, these voyages laid the foundations for the almost complete geographical knowledge of the world. Following these discoveries later, almost all areas of the world were, for the first time in history, brought into regular physical contact with one another.

Trade and Colonization

The new geographical discoveries had far-reaching consequences for the entire world. With the discovery of the sea-route to India, the Venetian control over Eurpoean trade ended and for a while the Portuguese monopoly over European trade with Asia was established. The Portuguese were, however, subsequently supplanted by the British, the Dutch and the French.

Wherever the explorers went, the flag of their nation and its missionaries soon followed. Thus began a period of expansion in which European nations are said to have been concerned with three things—gold, glory and God. Of course, gold was the most important thing. Columbus said, "Gold is the most precious of all commodities. He who possesses it has all he needs in this world, as also the means of rescuing souls from purgatory and restoring them to the enjoyment of prasadise." The search for *El Dorado*, the mythical land of fabulous riches, motivated the adventures of many an explorer. Many explorers sincerely believed that their main aim was to carry 'the knowledge of His Son to the far corners of the globe', but their voyages became possible only because of the support they received from their governments and financiers whose only aim was profit. Not only was there a tremendous increase in the volume of trade as well as articles of trade, but it was



The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

European Colonies and Trading Posts between 1500 and 1700

also the beginning of the colonization of Asia by European countries.

The colonization of Africa also began, though it was confined to the coastal areas and the large-scale conquest of Africa by the imperialist countries of Europe took place in the 19th century. In the Americas, the geographical discoveries led to the destruction of the civilizations of the Incas and the Aztecs, and the subjugation of the large indigenous population by a small number of Europeans. The Europeans plundered the gold and silver of the Incas and the Aztecs, and exploited the mines in Peru, Mexico and Bolivia, for precious metals and vast supplies of gold and silver reached Europe. The conquered people were forced to perform hard labour and, if they resisted, they were massacred. It has been estimated that between 1492 and 1538, the indigenous population of

6.16a American Indians forced to work in mines

what was called Hispaniola under the Spanish rule, which included Haiti and Dominican Republic, was reduced from 25000 to 500. The first conquerors were Spain and Portugal. However, soon the English, the French and the Dutch followed. One historian has described the activities of these explorers and *conquistadors* as marked by 'envy, malice, treachery, cruelty, lechery and plain greed'.

Commodities, totally unknown or unavailable in Europe before, such as potatoes, tobacco and maize, became available in Europe and vast resources of the Americas for the production of sugar, coffee, rice and cotton began to be exploited for the benefit of the Europeans.

One of the significant developments following the conquest of the Americas by the Europeans was the introduction of the plantation system in North America, West Indies and Brazil mainly for the production of sugarcane, tobacco and cotton. These plantations were worked by slave labour form Africa. The continents of Africa and the Americas were brought together by a brutal system of exploitation. While the indigenous population of the Americas (the American Indians as they are called) were reduced to the status of serfs who worked on the estates of European colonists, the plantations were worked by slaves. Slave trade was started in the late 15th century by individual merchants, sailors and pirates, but by the end of the 16th century, it passed into the hands of regular slave trading companies, officially approved by the governments of Eurpoean countries.

6.17 Enslaved African

For about 300 years, the people of Africa were hunted, first in the coastal areas and then further into the interior, by slave traders and their agents. They were captured and transported across the Atlantic Ocean and sold to work in the plantation. Millions of Africans were captured and exported. Hundreds of thousands died during the journey because of the extremely unhygienic conditions in the ships. It is estimated that in the British colonies in the West Indies alone, more than two million slaves were imported within a period of about a hundred years. The prosperity of the European colonizers in the Americas was based on the serf and slave labour of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas and African slaves, respectively.

These developments had a great impact on the development of Europe, particularly of those countries which were ahead of others in establishing their colonies and control over other parts of the countries

world and in international trade. You have read earlier about the beginning of the capitalist system in Europe. These developments furthered the process of the growth of capitalism.

You have read before that as a result of the geographical discoveries, the entire world, for the first time became known and, also, that for the first time all areas of the world were brought into regular physical contact with one another. However, this regular contact was accompanied by brutal exploitation of the people of some parts of the world.

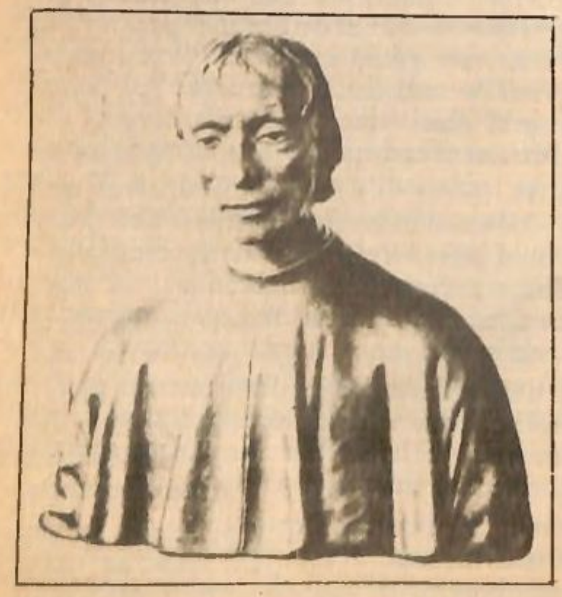
RISE OF NATION-STATES

If you looked at the political map of the 13th century Europe, you will recognize few of the nations of modern Europe. Europe was then ruled by thousands of feudal lords and political units or the states that we are familar with now did not exist. While studying feudal societies, you have read about the power and position of the feudal lords. There were kings but they had little power. To fight wars against other kings, they depended entirely on the levies provided by the lords.The boundaries of the estates of the lords and of kingdoms had no rational basis and were changing. There was nothing like a sense of common nationality which distinguished the people of one state from those of another. In the 12th century, there came into being the Holy Roman Empire. It was claimed to be a universal empire (in the same way in which the Catholic Church claimed to be the universal Church), though it included mainly Germany and Italy and the Emperor's control even in these areas was limited. The process of political development the final form of which we see in the present-day world—independent and sovereign national states—started during the Renaissance and the Reformation. This process started with the rise of national consciousness, the consciousness among a people inhabiting a more or less defined territory, that they were distinct from other peoples. It began with the emergence of national monarchies, two of the earliest being England and France.

The kings tried to establish their supremacy over the feudal lords and the conflicts between the two lasted over a long period of time. The kings were helped in their designs by the merchants and other inhabitants of the cities. You have read in an earlier section about the rise of trade and cities and of the middle class. To free themselves from interference by feudal lords and to further promote their interests, the cities needed a strong central authority which the kings, by curbing the power of the feudal lords, were trying to establish. The interests of the merchants would be promoted by strong kings who would put an end to the feudal anarchy and local disorders. The kings would also remove the restrictions on division of countries into small estates so that trade could flourish and roads and canals could be built and law and order could be enforced to facilitate trade. The kings protected the merchants of their own countries from the competition of merchants from other countries and supported them with their armed power against their rivals. The kings found in the merchants their allies who provided them the money they needed for building their own independent armies totally under their command and for creating their administrative system, the courts and

other paraphernalia of the state which could be completely under their control. Earlier, the kings were powerless against the feudal lords on whom they depended even for their soldiers. Thus a process of the destruction of the power of the feudal lords started. The process was aided by the introduction of gunpowder in Europe, against which the feudal castles and fortresses provided no defence.

There were many other reasons for the decline of the power of the feudal lords about some of which you have read earlier. As a result of all these developments, the political fragmentation which characterized the Middle Ages began to give way to the rise of strong states under kings who tried to concentrate more and more power and functions in their own hands. There were many changes in the political thinking. The medieval thinkers believed that the authority of a ruler was limited. Now the view was advocated that Christians must obey their rulers because the rulers were the representatives of God on earth. The views of Machiavelli, the most outstanding political philosopher of the times, have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. He was opposed to any limitations on the authority of the ruler. There could also be no moral or religious considerations in the governance of the state. You have read about political and national factors in the Reformation. The rise of national languages also helped the process of the emergence of strong national states by strengthening national consciousness. The process of colonial expansion which started with the discovery of new sea-routes and new lands was also connected with these developments.



6.18 Machiavelli

The First Nation States

The rise of nation-states which started in this period brought about the end of the political system of the Middle Ages.

To comprehend the nature of the political developments in this period, you should study the political developments in a few selected countries, e.g. in England and France. You should remember that the process of the formation of the nation-states took a long time.

The first nation-states where strong monarchies came to power were France and England.

France was known as a separate kingdom in the 9th century, but in the 13th century Philip Augustus was still trying to reduce the power of the feudal lords and increase his own. The Hundred Years' War, fought between England and France between 1337 and 1453, helped French kings to establish their authority. Joan of Arc roused the patriotic sentiments of the people and led the French Army in freeing the northern half

of France from England. When the war ended, the French monarch was really a national ruler, and France was on its way to becoming a modern state.

William the Conqueror established a strong monarchy in England in the 11th century. In the following two hundred years, the feudal lords increased their power, but during the 14th century, they began to lose out. They could not withstand the growth of trade and commerce and of cities, and the rise of the middle class. These things increased the financial and military powers of the king. The Wars of the Roses fought between two groups of feudal lords for control over the monarchy from 1455 to 1485 finally put an end to feudalism. The war weakened the lords; people were disgusted with feudal anarchy. Henry VII, the first king of the Tudor dynasty, established a strong monarchy with the help of the middle classes. The English monarchy grew stronger under the Tudor rulers in the 16th century.

Spain, Portugal, and Holland also began to develop into nation-states. Two of today's major European countries, Italy and Germany, however, remained divided. Neither was to be a 'nation' until the second half of the 19th century. Feudalism had disappeared in these countries by the 15th century. In Italy, a strong middle class had arisen as a result of trade with the East. However, the interference of the Pope and other powers in the affairs of Italy prevented her from becoming a single nation at this time. In Germany, the dukes were powerful, and jealously guarded their power.

Nation-States and National Rivalry

Since the rise of nation-states, beginning in the 14th century, the political history of the world has increasingly been the history of independent nation-states. The rulers or governments of these states have regarded no interest second to that of their own and respected no other authority on matters that concerned the interest of the state. Machiavelli, in his writings, had told them how to govern. A strong feeling of nationalism grew up in each state. This nationalism was often directed against other nations. It led to national jealousies and rivalries and conflicts. These rivalries were usually over trade and, later, in getting possession or control of territory in Asia or the Americas. The nations' greed for colonies, maximum profits, and national glory led to many wars between the countries of Europe. Such conflicts and wars have continued into our own times. During the past few decades attempts have been made to find ways to eliminate these conflicts and promote the idea of co-operation between nations instead of competition and rivalry.

Accomplishments of Nation-States

The nation-states have many achievements to their credit. They finally put an end to the extreme disorder of anarchy of feudal times. Along with destroying feudalism, nation-states destroyed serfdom in the countries where it had not already disappeared. The formation of nation-states was a big help in encouraging economic development—improved ways of working to produce and exchange the things that people needed. It has made national boundaries more rational than the militaristic and arbitrary limits of ancient empires and medieval estates. Nation-states have helped to unite people belonging to a common culture and thus made it possible for many groups of people to develop their talents. Through

their national loyalties people have found ways of self-expression and each nation has made special contributions that all the people of the world can share.

STRUGGLE AGAINST ABSOLUTISM

The political system that developed in the nation-states was absolutist in character. The kings were absolute rulers or 'despots', as they were called. The doctrine of divine right of kings was advocated and it was said that the kings were given the right to rule by God. An English king declared that "Kings are justly called gods for they exercise a manner of resemblance of Divine power upon earth". A French king of the 17th and early 18th century declared, *"L'e'tat C'est mot"* which means 'I am the state'. Thus the kings considered that all authority in the state was derived from their person and there were no restraints of any kind on their powers.

The absolute powers assumed by the rulers helped in putting an end to the instability that feudal system had created. It helped in building powerful states. For these reasons, these rulers enjoyed the support of merchants and other people who could not flourish under the feudal system. Strong stable governments helped them to strengthen their position inside the country and against their rivals outside.

However, in course of time, the despotic rulers began to face opposition inside their countries. The people, including those sections of society which had earlier supported strong monarchs, began to protest against unjust laws and against the powers of the monarch. They began to demand curtailment of the absolute powers of the rulers and a share for themselves in the state power. The conflict between the rulers and the people came to a head first in England.

The English Revolution

England's revolution began in the 17th century with a conflict between the king and Parliament over the question of political power. The civil war that followed ended in the execution of the king and the establishment of a republican form of government. Later, the monarchy was restored, but with Parliament as supreme political power in the country.

Origin of English Parliament—The origin of the English Parliament can be traced back to a council which King Henry I created in the 11th century. It consisted of the chief nobles and church dignitaries. By the 13th century, this council had come to be called Parliament.

The next important parliamentary development came in 1215, when King John accepted the demands of the barons of England embodied in a charter called the *Magna Carta*. This charter tried to safeguard the interests of barons from the encroachments of royal authority and protect merchants from arbitrary taxation. For centuries afterwards, this charter was forgotten, to be rediscovered by the supporters of Parliament in the 17th century.

In the 13th century, during the reign of Henry III, there was a civil war in England on the question of taxes. The leader of the rebels, Simon de Montfort, summoned Parliament after the king had been defeated. The membership of this Parliament included knights and representatives of towns, who were mainly merchants.

The institution created by de Montfort continued. It was not a popularly elected body. Its most important power lay in its

control over the revenue and expenditure of the government. For some time, it remained an agency of the kings through which they levied and collected taxes. With the increase in the representation of merchants and other non-feudal calsses, it tried to defend their interests. When the Tudor kings established their despotic rule, they maintained a semblance of showing deference to the authority of Parliament. The Tudor rule was supported by the merchants, and Parliament functioned more or less as a rubber stamp of the kings. The same Parliament, however, revolted against the later absolute rule of the Stuart kings.

Conflict between Parliament and Monarchy

By the time of the Stuarts, a great expansion of the new gentry had taken place. This new class consisted of rich land-owners, wealthy merchants, lawyers and high government officials. The Reformation had made this class rich because they had bought church lands confiscated and sold by the Tudor kings. The people of this class were represented in Parliament, and their interests came into conflict with the Stuart kings. The Stuarts were the upholders of the theory of the 'Divine Right' of kings. When Parliament refused to grant money, the Stuart kings levied tariff duties, sold the titles of nobility and imposed taxes and extorted loans from wealthy merchants without asking Parliament. The Stuart King Charles I persisted in these illegal methods. Thus, his conflict with Parliament grew.

Many developments in the spheres of ideas and religion helped in undermining the position of the English monarchy and provided momentum to Parliament's struggle against the king. Traditional views in the fields of theology and political philosophy had been challenged since the time of the Renaissance and Reformation. Following the theories of scientists, such as Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, about the nature of the physical world, teachings of the Bible were questioned. Some people came to believe that the world was a machine governed by the laws of nature which could be understood and made use of by man. The existing theories of religion could not help man in understanding this world and should be replaced by science, they said. Ideas of religious liberty, political equality, and individual freedom spread. Some people advocated a democratic form of government based on the popular will. Monarchy as an institution was condemned by a few only, though most people believed that Parliament was above the king and could remove him.

The religious conflict helped in unifying the people against the king. There was a demand for reform of the Church of England which had been established by Elizabeth I. This movement was led by the Puritans whose creed was becoming popular, particularly with the new gentry. The Puritans had a large majority in Parliament. They asked for the abolition of certain Church ceremonies and wanted only educated persons to be made ministers of the Church. King Charles I, who was a follower of the Church of England, was very unpopular with the Puritans, who feared the revival of the Catholic Church. However, the religious conflict in itself was not wholly responsible for the civil war that was soon to come. It coincided with the conflicts between the middle class, or new gentry, and the monarchy. An increasing share in the

government was the principal aim of the new gentry.

Civil War

In 1640, Charles I was involved in a war with Scotland and was forced to call Parliament for money. But Parliament forced him to abolish a tax called ship money and to sign a bill agreeing not to dissolve Parliament without its own consent. Finding his position threatened, the King decided to deal with Parliament severely. He came in person to Parliament to arrest five of its members. However,"the birds were flown"; they had left and found refuge in the city. Failing to arrest them and seeing the defiant mood of the city, the King left with his followers for the north of England to mobilize support against Parliament.

The war started in August 1642. The supporters of the king belonged to the nobility and the Anglican clergy or Roman Catholics. They were called *cavaliers*. The supporters of Parliament belonged to the new gentry and were Puritans. They were called *roundheads* because they cropped their hair close, unlike the style of long curled hair worn by the cavaliers.

Fighting continued for five years. In the end Parliament came out victorious. Charles I was captured and publicly executed in 1649. Parliament established a republic.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688

The republic lasted only eleven years. Cromwell, who had palyed the most important role in defeating the King,became the 'Lord Protector'. He was a military dictator and had absolute command of a powerful army. After his death, the monarchy was restored and the son of the executed king, Charles II, was made king. He and his successor, James II, tried to assert the superiority of the monarchy. But feelings against this kind of rule had grown too strong. In 1688, a group of poiliticians invited William of Orange, the husband of James II's daughter, Mary, and ruler of Holland, to become king. Without firing a shot, William reached London and James II fled to France. The throne was granted to William and Mary jointly. This event is known as the *Glorious Revolution*.

Supremacy of Parliamentary Power

The Glorious Revolution, which was a bloodless revolution, completely destroyed the doctrine of the 'Divine Right' of kings in England. Parliament enacted a Bill of Right in 1689 which provided that suspension of laws, levying of taxes, and raising of an army could be done only with the consent of Parliament, which would meet more frequently. It provided for trial by jury, the right to petition, and freedom from excessive bails, fines and punishments of persons accused or convicted of crimes.

The Glorious Revolution marked the triumph of Parliament over the monarchy. William and Mary had received the crown from Parliament and were dependent upon Parliament for keeping it. No longer were the English kings to have independent authority of their own. Through the Act of Settlement (1701) Parliament chose the successors of William and Mary, thus affirming the principle that the monarchy was dependent upon Parliament.

The supremacy of Parliament, however, did not mean the supremacy of the people. Parliament was controlled by the new

gentry. During this period in England as in other countries, the word 'people' was used to mean upper classes. Limitations of the authority of the ruler were intended to promote the interests of the upper classes. The movement for democracy and sovereignty of the people started later. You will read about these in a later chapter.

The period from about 1500 to about 1700 was one of tremendous changes in the history of Europe. The feudal system in many countries of Europe either disintegrated or was in a state of decay. In its place, a new social system began to take shape. The attitude of mind which was born with Renaissance enabled the people to think for themselves and to speak and act in ways they had never done before. They expressed the new attitude through art, literature, revolt against the church and adventurous sea voyages. At the same time, foundations of modern science were laid. The discovery of new lands led to colonization and increased trade which enabled the merchants to accumulate fabulous amounts of gold and silver. Business methods and procedures began to change so as to promote money-making. The nation-states with despotic rulers helped this process for a time. In the 17th century, the new social groups or classes began to struggle against autocratic rulers and they succeeded in destroying the autocratic rule in England.

All these developments may be said to constitute the beginning of the modern age in European history.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. What is the significance of the growth in trade and rise of towns in the period of renaissance?
2. For what achievements or reasons is each of the following people famous? Petrarch, Michelangelo, Raphael, Thomas More, Machiavelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Gutenberg, Martin Luther, Wycliffe, Galileo, Copernicus, Dante, John Huss, Francis Bacon, Henry VIII, Harvey, Vaselius, Joan of Arc, Cervantes.
3. What practices of the Roman Catholic Church and churchmen of the 15th and 16th centuries did the reformers object to?
4. Explain the meaning of the following terms :
   Protestant Reformation, Counter Reformation, humanism, heretic, nation-state, 'gold, glory and god', absolutism, despotism.
5. What were the main ideas behind the English Revolution?

Things to do

1. Sketch and label with dates, on an outline map of the world, the approximate routes of Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Magellan.
2. Collect, label and exhibit pictures that illustrate the Renaissance art.
3. Compare the map of Europe when the first nation-states developed with a map of Europe today. Make a list of the nations that have been formed there since A.D. 1600.

Things to think about and discuss

1. Would you say the 'scientific method' was entirely 'discovered' by the Renaissance scientists or perhaps 'rediscovered and advanced' ? Before giving your answer and reasons, review the developments in science as given in Chapters 3 and 5.
2. Do you consider the development of nation-states 'a step forward' in man's progress ? Why, or why not ?
3. What is your understanding of the term 'humanism' ?
   Give examples of the influence of humanism in the Renaissance art and literature.
4. Discuss the connection between the voyages of discovery and trade. What were the immediate consequences of the work of explorers on the people of the Americas and Africa ?
5. In what way do the developments described in this chapter mark the beginning of the modern age ? Discuss.

CHAPTER 7

Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution

TOWARDS the end of the Middle Ages, feudalism as an economic system had started declining. This process was furthered by the Renaissance and other development about which you have read in the last chapter. The rise of towns and cities and the growth in trade stimulated the production of manufactured goods. There was an increase in the demand for goods which previously had been considered luxury goods. Life in the new towns and cities had created a desire for many new goods also. All these factors provided a great stimulus to the production of manufactured goods. For a long time, however, the techniques and organization of producing goods did not undergo any significant improvement. The traditional methods were inadequate to meet the growing demand for goods. During the later half of the 18th century there began a series of changes which revolutionized the techniques and organization of production. These developments resulted in the rise of a new type of economy– an industrial economy.

The term 'Industrial Revolution' is used to describe these developments because the changes came rapidly and they had far-reaching effects on the history of the world.

Rise of Capitalism

The new system of society which had been emerging in Europe from the 15th century is called capitalism. Under capitalism, the instruments and the means by which goods are produced are owned by private individuals and the production is carried out for making profit. The workers under this system do not own anything but work for a wage. The owners of wealth under capitalism who are called capitalists do not keep their wealth or consume it or use it for purposes of display but invest it to make profit. Goods are produced for sale in the market with a view to making profit. This system is in marked contrast with the feudal system in which goods were produced for local use and the investment of wealth for making profit did not take place. Economic life under

feudalism was static as goods were produced for local consumption and there was no incentive to produce more by employing better means of producing goods for a bigger market. In contrast, the economy under capitalism was fast moving with the aim of producing more and more goods for bigger markets so that more profits could be made.

Capitalism began to grow as a result of the developments described in Chapter 6. The discovery of new lands and the establishment of colonies had resulted in unprecedented expansion of trade and accumulation of wealth by merchants. The trade included also the trade in human beings, that is, slave trade. The colonization was accompanied by the plunder of the wealth of the people who were colonized. For example, the treasures of the Inca and the Aztec civilizations were plundered by the Spaniards. Mines in the newly conquered areas in the Americas were also exploited for precious metals like gold and silver. Large numbers of native people were worked to death in these mines. You have also read about the use of slave labour in the plantations in the Americas. Colonization of Asia caused similar havoc and devastation. During a few decades of Dutch rule, the population of a province of Java in Indonesia was reduced to less than one-fourth of its former size. The defeat of the Nawab of Bengal by the English in 1757 was followed by years of naked plunder of the wealth of Bengal. According to estimates of the English government at that time, the English Company and its officials received £ 6,000,000 as gifts during the period of 1757-1766. The plunder by the English contributed to a famine in 1769-70 in which about a quarter of the population of Bengal perished. Thus, a lot of wealth was accumulated in Europe for investment to make more profits. In the words of Karl Marx, "The treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised looting, enslavement, and murder, floated back to the mother country and were there turned into capital."

The Industrial Revolution

The desire to produce more goods at low cost to make higher profits led to the Industrial Revolution and further growth of capitalism. The Industrial Revolution began in England in about 1750. It was then that machines began to take over some of the work of men and animals in the production of goods and commodities. That is why we often say that the Industrial Revolution was the beginning of a 'machine age'.

Of course, there were many machines in use before 1750. The plough, air-pump, printing press and spinning wheel are only a few of the many examples that could be listed. For hundreds of years each civilization had been trying to perfect old technical skills and develop new ones. But after 1750, new inventions came faster, and they were of a kind that brought more rapid changes in more people's lives. The Industrial Revolution changed men's ways of living and thinking all over the world.

You have read before that the guild system had given way to the 'domestic' or the 'putting-out' system. In the 18th century, the domestic system had become obsolete. It started giving way to a new system called the 'factory system'. In place of simple tools and the use of animal and manual power, new machines and steam power came to be increasingly used. Many new cities sprang up and artisans and dispossessed peasants went there to work. Production was now carried on in a factory

(in place of workshops in homes), with the help of machines (in place of simple tools). Facilities for production were owned and managed by *capitalists*, the people with money to invest in further production. Everything required for production was provided by the capitalists for the workers who were brought together under one roof. Everything belonged to the owner of the factory, including the finished product, and workers worked for wages. This system, known as the factory system, brought on the Industrial Revolution. The early form of capitalism about which you have read before was now transformed into industrial capitalism.

The Revolution Begins in England

England in the 18th century was in the most favourable position for an industrial revolution. Through her overseas trade, including trade in slaves, she had accumulated vast profits which could provide the necessary capital. In the trade rivalries of European countries, she had emerged as an unrivalled power. She had acquired colonies which ensured a regular supply of raw materials. After the disappearance of serfdom, people were no longer tied to the land and were free to take to any job they could find.

The enclosure movement had begun in the 18th century. Big land-owners wanted to consolidate their large land-holdings. In this process, small peasants who had small holdings in land were ousted and a large army of landless unemployed people was created. Thus there was no shortage of labour force to work in the factories. As a result of the revolution of the 17th century, a stable system of government had been established, which was no longer under the domination of the feudal classes. Commercial classes had acquired more political power and there was no danger of government interference.

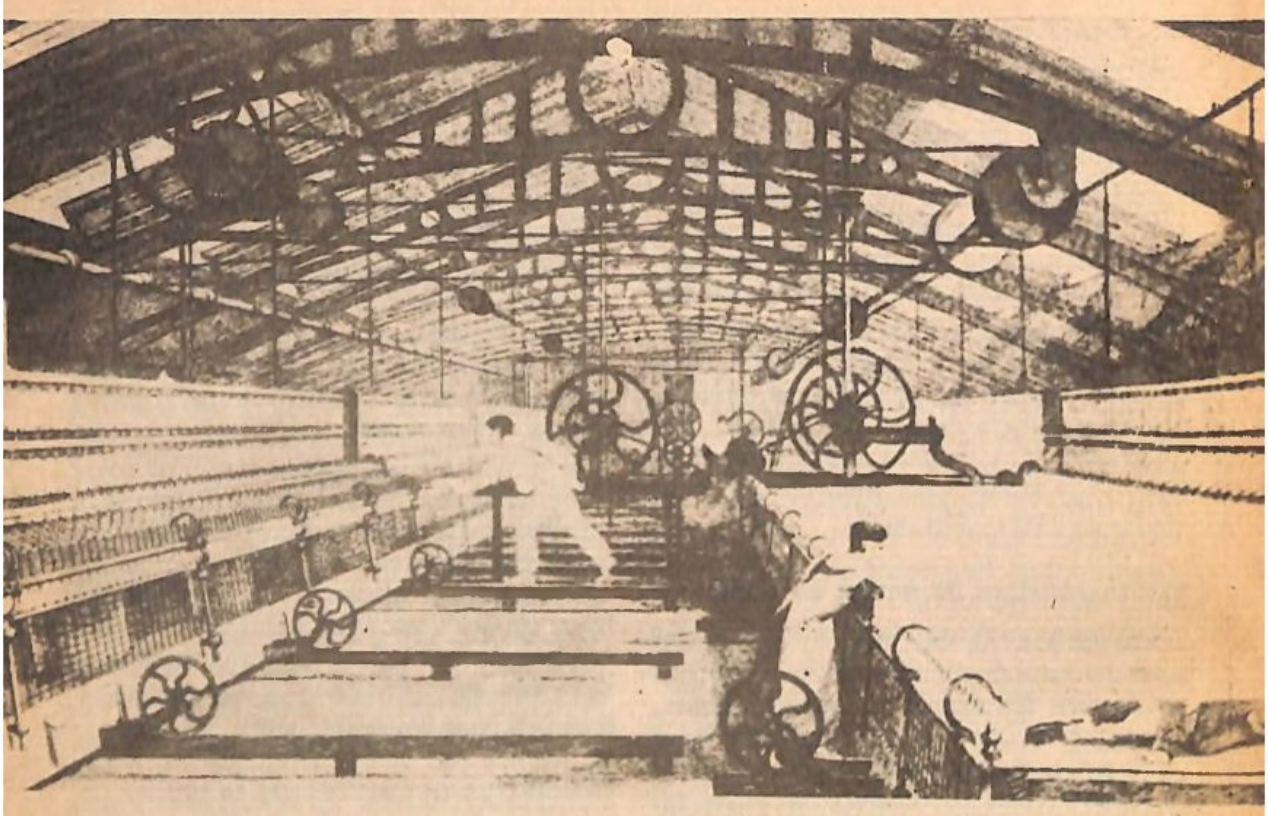
England had plenty of natural resources, such as iron and coal, essential for industries. The sources of iron and coal existed side by side and this saved England from many difficulties that other countries faced. England developed a large shipping industry and had no problem of transportation.

No other country enjoyed all these advantages at this period. Some suffered from a lack of capital or natural resources and some from an unfavourable political system. These factors made England a natural place for the Industrial Revolution to begin. Almost all other European countries had agrarian economies and lived under backward political systems. Many of them, such as Italy and Germany, were not even united and suffered from many economic restrictions.

Revolution in the Textile Industry

In the 1700s the English East India Company was sending cotton cloth from India to England. Soon, calico cloth made in Calicut and Dacca muslin and Kashmiri shawls were in great demand in England. Shrewd English businessmen then began to import cotton and make it into cloth in England. When the workers using old-fashioned spinning-wheels and handlooms could not keep up with the increasing demand, a series of inventions came along to make faster spinning and weaving possible.

Hargreaves invented a machine which speeded up spinning. Arkwright adapted this machine for running with water. Crompton, some time later, combined the advantages of the machines invented by Hargreaves and Arkwright. These three inventions alone made it possible for



7.1 A spinning mill in 19th Century England

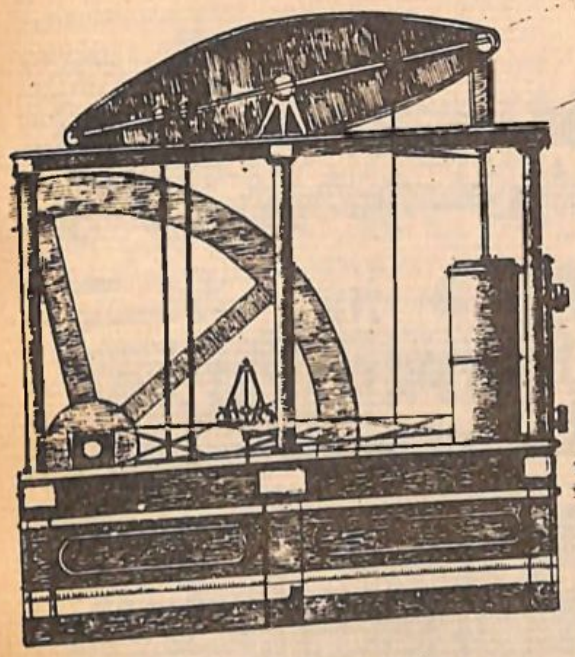
England to produce thread that was finer and cheaper than any that could be produced by others or with older techniques. Then in 1785, Cartwright invented a power loom. This machine could be run by horses or bullocks and later, when factories were set up along rivers and canals, water power was used to operate it.

But enough raw cotton for feeding these machines was still not available because the process of separating the fibres from the seeds was very slow. A worker could clean only five or six pounds of cotton a day by hand. In 1793, Eli Whitney, an American, invented a 'cotton gin.' This machine made it possible to separate the seeds from cotton three hundred times faster than by hand.

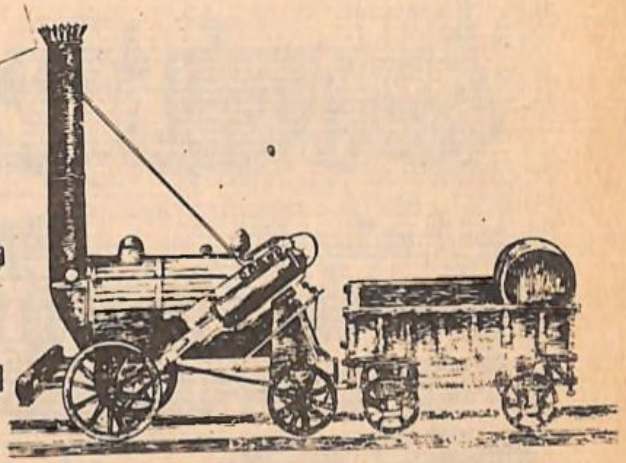
Power from the Steam Engine

In 1760, England imported about two million kilograms of cotton; in 1815, about 50 million kilograms; in 1840 nearly 250 million kilograms. Such a tremendous increase in raw cotton imports would not have taken place but for the invention of the steam engine by James Watt in 1769. It was this machine that made it possible to produce goods on a really big scale. Machines run by the muscles of men or animals, or by water power, could not compete with those driven by the steam engine. This invention revolutionized production.

With steam power available, there was a demand for more machinery. England had plenty of iron and coal to make steel



7.2 Watt's Steam Engine



7.3 Model of Stephenson's 'Rocket'

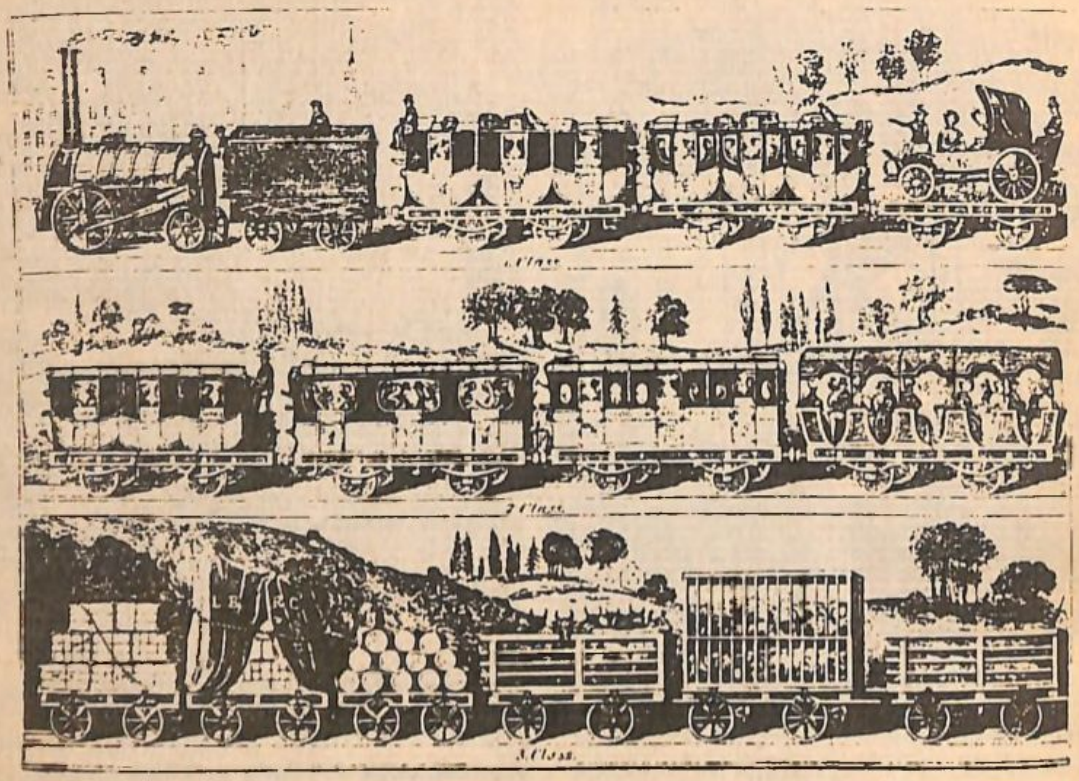
and manufacture machinery, but new and cheaper ways of processing iron had to be found. The development of the blast furnace and, later, the method of turning low-grade iron into steel, enabled the English industries to produce steel cheaply. Thus they could have more and better machines.

Improvement in Transportation

In 1814, George Stephenson developed steam engine to haul coal from mines to ports by railways. In 1830, the first railway train began to carry passengers and freight from Liverpool to Manchester. These events were followed by a great wave of railroad construction in England and the United States. As early as 1853, in Lord Dalhousie's time, the first railroad was laid in India.

The need to transport raw materials and manufactured products led to the improvement of roads and the digging of canals—in England and other countries. Mc Adam devised the method of making *pakka* or 'macadamized' roads. To expand facilities for transport by water much cheaper than overland England began connecting rivers and lakes with canals. Canal building spread to Europe and America and was a big help in providing cheaper transportation, especially after steam boats came into use.

Improved transportation helped in carrying messages as well as people and goods. Rawland Hill's idea of the penny post—fast and cheap communication by letter—began to operate in England in the early 19th century. Soon it was adopted in other countries, including India. People could thus send letters to and from all parts of the country at the same low rate



7.4 An 1837 print of British Railways in early 1830s

regardless of the distance. Business concerns took advantage of the penny-post in their buying and selling transactions far and near.

Revolution in Agriculture

There was a revolution in agriculture also. The revolution in agriculture in fact had started before the Industrial Revolution. Naturally, there were changes in farming methods to produce more food, and more importantly, to produce cash crops for the market and raw materials for industries. New farm machinery included the steel plough and harrow for breaking the ground, the mechanical drill for seeding and the horse-drawn cultivator to replace the hoe. There were also machines for reaping and threshing.

Farmers adopted intensive manuring and the practice of crop rotation to maintain soil fertility. The latter is the practice of changing the crop on a piece of land each year, for example, wheat, barley, clover, and so on– instead of letting the land lie fallow every third year as was done in the Middle Ages. Crop rotation is effective because different crops take different elements from the soil. Moreover, planting a crop like clover can actually be better for the soil than letting it lie fallow, because clover is one of the plants that add fertility to the soil.

Land-owners in England also began to

enlarge their farms. They had already consolidated their holdings through the enclosure movement, as you have read before. The strips of land that lay scattered about the village were so consolidated that they could hold all their land in one piece. In doing so, the big land-owner quite unfairly got possession of the peasant's small holding along with his own. Sometimes big land-holders took over the common meadow in a village also leaving the small land-owners and tenants with no pasture.But the big land-owners controlled Parliament in those days and got laws passed that enabled them to do these things. The result was that the peasants were forced off the land. With no other means of livelihood, they moved to the new industrial towns and cities where they got jobs at whatever wage the factory-owner would pay. Industries thus benefited, but at the small farmer's expense.

Spread of the Industrial Revolution

In a little more than fifty years after the use of machines began, England had become the world's leading industrial nation. Between 1813 and 1855, for example, her textile exports to India jumped from 50,000 kilograms to well over 2.5 million. During the same period, the amount of coal mined rose from 15 to 64 million tonnes and became an important export. Meanwhile, England's production of pig iron increased from 690,000 tonnes to over 3 million—enough to supply all the machinery and hardware she needed at home, besides sending vast quantities to other countries.

The Industrial Revolution in Other Countries

In the continent of Europe, the Industrial Revolution began to make some headway after 1815, after the defeat of Napoleon and the end of 23 years of war. Then machines were introduced in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Germany. However, unstable governments and unrest among the people in some of these countries slowed the growth of industries for some time.

France, by 1850, was developing the iron industry though she had to import both iron ore and coal. Germany had, by 1865, occupied second place as a producer of steel, but with England far ahead in the lead. After a late start, Germany's industrial development took an amazing leap after 1870 when the German states were finally welded into one nation. Soon Germany was to become England's rival.

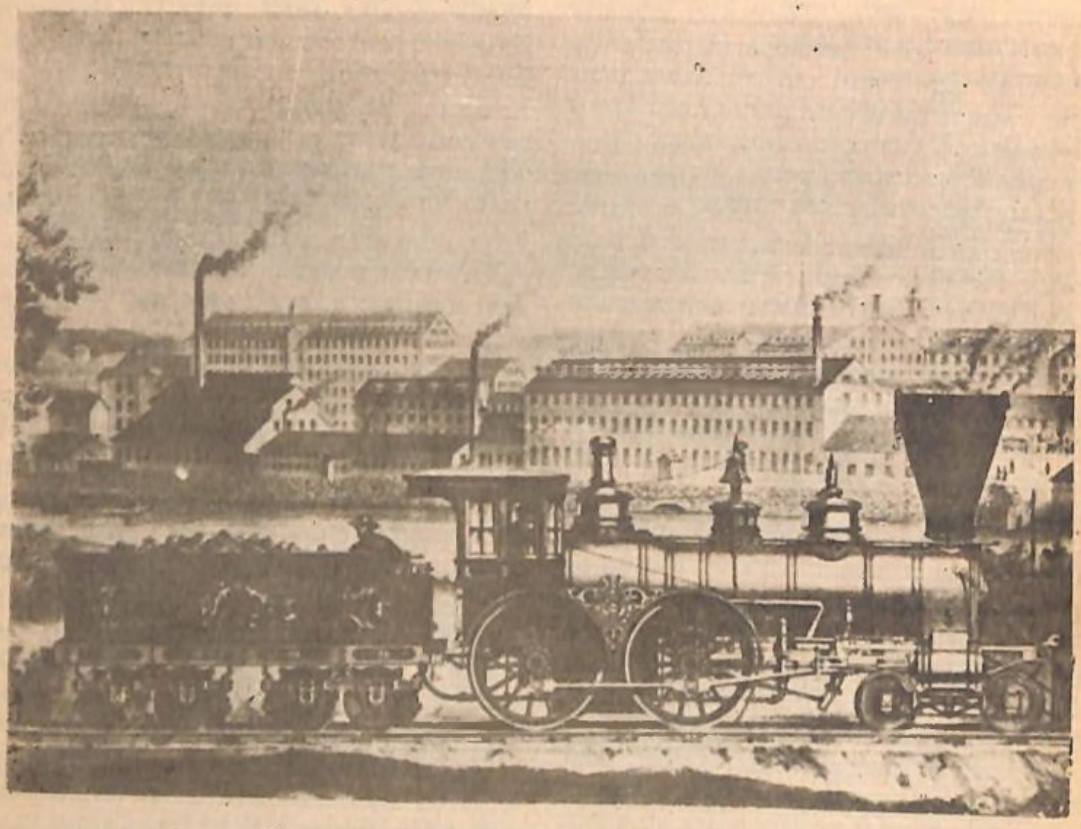
Russia was the last of the big European powers to have an industrial revolution. She was rich in mineral resources but lacked capital and free labour. After she freed the serfs in 1861, she obtained capital from foreign countries and Russian industry moved ahead. However, it was only after Russia's 1917 Revolution that rapid industrial development started.

The United States had introduced machines and started factories before 1800—after gaining independence from England. By 1860 she had well established textile, steel, and shoe industries. The American industries grew very rapidly after 1870.

Japan was the first country in Asia to industrialize. Traditionally, Japan produced mainly such articles as silk, porcelain and toys. By the end of the 19th century, Japanese production included steel, machinery, metal goods and chemicals—and in quantities large enough for export.

Competition in Trade and Rise of Imperialism

As England was the first country where



7.5 Landscape of an industrial area in 19th century Europe

industries developed, she gained almost complete control over world markets. Even when people in other countries began to use machines they found they could not compete with England's low prices. To help keep these low priced products from coming into their markets many countries introduced *protective tariffs*, that is, governments passed laws that required the payment of such a nigh tax on imported British manufactures that similar products made locally sold more as they were cheaper. The levy of tariffs to protect new industries became a widespread practice.

The search for markets and sources of raw materials resulted in international rivalries. First England and, later, other Western countries began to look for new sources of raw materials and markets for their manufactures. Towards the end of the 19th century Japan was industrialized and joined the race. In this race, almost the entire non-industrialized world was carved up into colonies—spheres of influence or territories—for economic and political domination by industrialized countries. Thus arose imperialism, under which strong nations subordinated the economies of the countries under their domination to their own interests. They forced them to buy and sell on their own terms. The race for colonies caused many an international conflict. The countries which had been industrialized late and

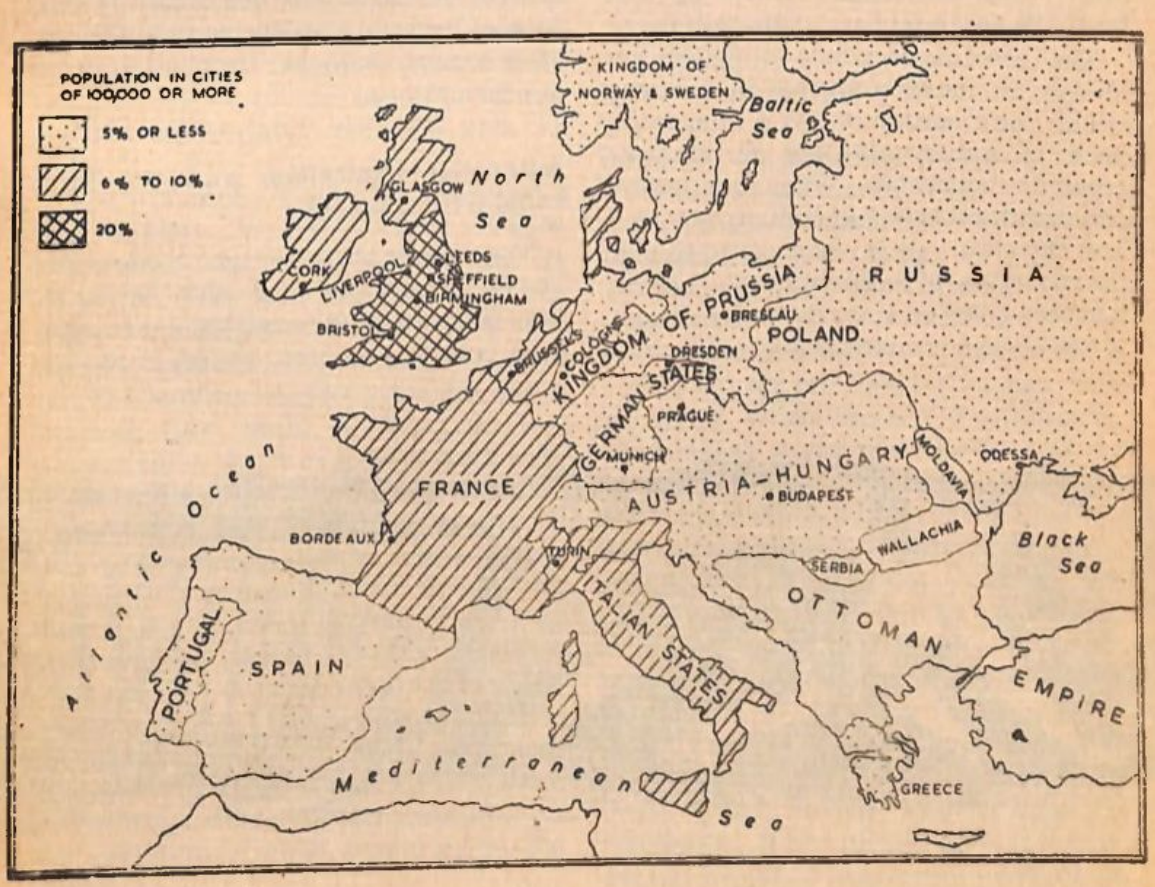
had no colonies, wanted to wrest them from those that had. Countries which had colonies wanted still more.

CONSEQUENCES OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

From Village to City

Before the Industrial Revolution, most of the population of the world lived in villages and was dependent on agriculture. Almost all economic needs of man were met within the village itself. Almost the entire population was, in one way or the other, connected with land. The towns and cities that had arisen since the beginning of civilization were, as you have seen, centres of crafts and of political and administrative control. Trade was carried on between towns and cities of the same country and of other countries and affected only a very small percentage of the population.

With the growth of industrialization the picture was completely transformed. The centre of economic life shifted to the cities. The new cities and towns that grew were important more as centres of industry than as political and administrative



Population in large cities of Europe in 1850. Only cities with a population of 100,000 or more which grew between 1800 and 1850 are shown.

centres. A large part of the population now started living in cities where thousands of people worked in industrial establishments. This population was not connected with land. Now in some industrialized countries, less than 20 per cent of the population is connected with land. In our country, though still an overwhelming majority lives in villages, there is a gradual increase in the population dependent on industry. In highly industrialized countries, the share of industrial production in the total national income is far larger than that of agriculture. Urban and rural economies have become mutually dependent and complementary.

The crowding of people into cities has always produced problems of housing, health, and sanitation. The quickening pace of industrialization in England created deplorable living conditions, concentration in smoky industrial towns, and city slums grew worse. Even though the movement of people from village to city has been going on since civilization began, it has always aroused sadness. Life for a villager in the city resulted in many social strains. Many social bonds were dissolved. Many moral restraints which life in a village community imposed broke down. On the other hand, men became freer to develop their capabilities.

The Industrial Revolution brought countries and peoples together. The relations between countries and peoples, however, were not based on equality as the industrially developed countries began to control the economy of countries which were not industrially developed. In spite of this, the Industrial Revolution created an international consciousness among peoples because the developments in one place began to influence the developments in other places.

Industrial Capitalism and the First Industrial Workers

The system of society which came into being as a result of the Industrial Revolution may be termed industrial capitalism. The main classes in this society were the

7.6 Children were employed to pull carts loaded with coal through the dark tunnels in coal mines.

capitalists—the owners of the means of production—and workers who worked for a wage. It resulted in the concentration of economic power in a few hands. The independent craftsman became rare. A small number of capitalists came to control the lives of not only a large number of workers whom they employed but also, directly or indirectly, the economic life of the entire society. The concentration of economic power in a few hands resulted in shocking social inequalities and created a wide gulf between capitalists and the rest of the population. These inequalities were so obvious and so great that Disraeli, a British Prime Minister of the 19th century, spoke of the existence of two nations in England—the rich and the poor.

The Industrial Revolution produced a vast number of landless, toolless workers, who were wholly dependent on an employer. They had to accept whatever wage the employer offered, for there were usually more workers than jobs. Women and children were employed even in mines because they could be hired for less money. Often they had to work from 15 to 18 hours a day with no rest periods. If perchance they fell asleep on duty, they might be beaten by a heartless overseer. Working surroundings were unsafe and dirty. The horrible condition of child labourers is stated in the evidence collected by a committee of British Parliament in 1816. The following information was collected from a one-time master of apprentices in a cotton mill. He was asked questions by the committee on the condition of child labourers in his factory.

'At what age were they taken ?'.

—'Those that came from London were from about eight or ten to fifteen.'

'Up to what period were they apprenticed ?'

—'One-and-twenty'.

What were the hours of work ?'

—'From five o'clock in the morning till eight at night'.

'Were fifteen hours in the day the regular hours of work ?'

—'Yes'.

'When the works were stopped for the repair of the mill, or for any want of cotton, did the children afterwards make up for the loss of that time ?'

—'Yes'.

'Did the children sit or stand to work?'

—'Stand'.

The whole of their time ?

—'Yes'.

'Were there any seats in the mill' ?

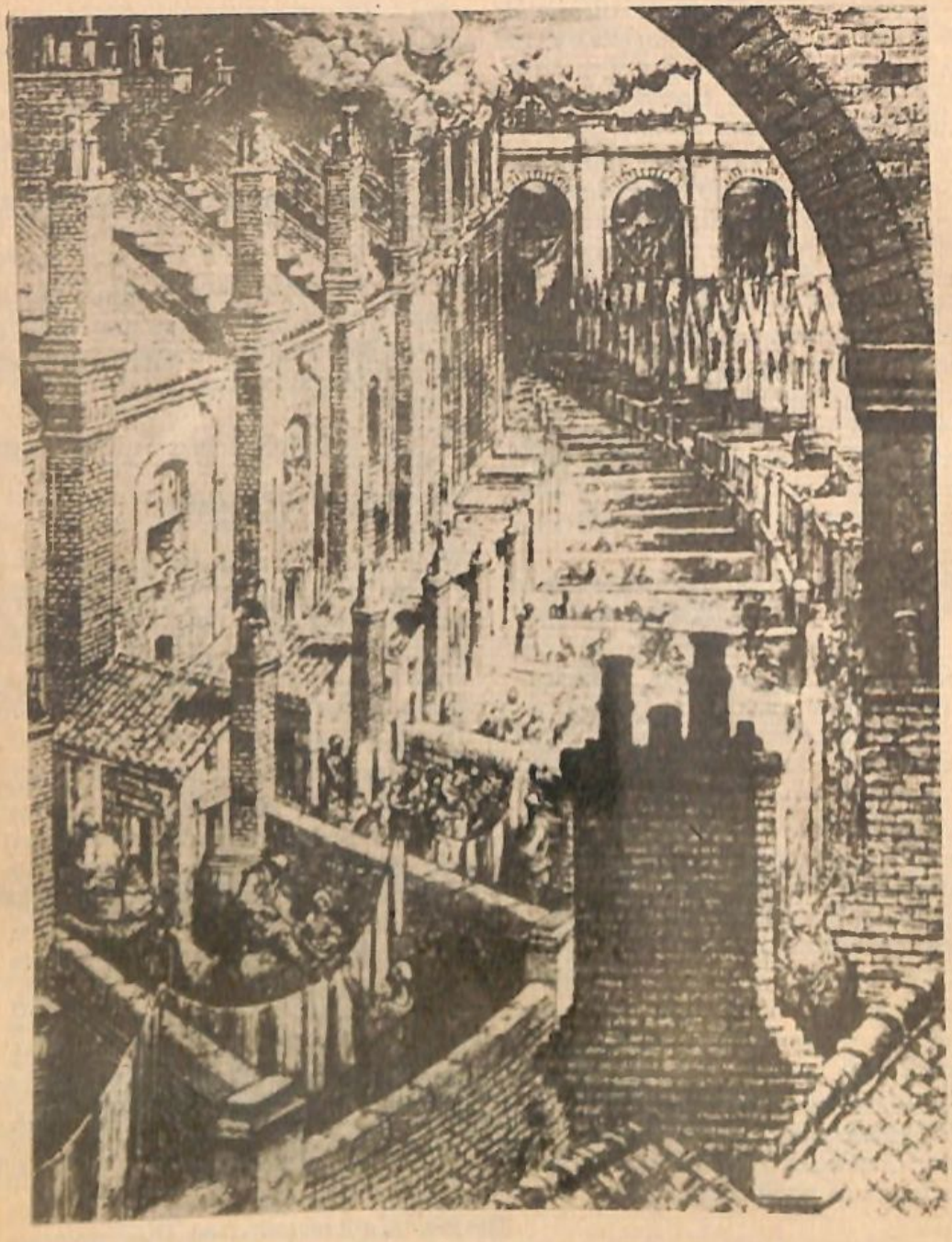
—'None. I have found them frequently upon the mill-floors, after the time they should have been in bed'.

'Were any children injured by the machinery ?

—'Very frequently'.

The houses provided for workers were no better. Whole areas of the industrial cities where workers lived were crowded slums. Accidents, disease and epidemics were common. A report on the slums of Manchester in 1837 mentions, among other things, that almost all inhabitants of many streets perished in cholera.

If an employer was displeased with a worker for any reason, he could dismiss the worker at will. A worker had little choice but to accept an employer's terms, or be jobless. If he was ill and unable to work, he got no pay, and he might be discharged. If he suffered an accident on the job, he got no help from the employer. When business was slack, a factory-owner regularly dismissed as many employees as possible leaving them with no means of



7.7 A mid-19th century engraving of the London slums by Dore

livelihood. It was the industrial workers in England who first endured conditions such as those just described but workers in other countries fared no better.

Efforts to Improve Working Conditions in Industry

A few humanitarian reformers and some land-owners who were jealous of big businessmen combined with English workers to get the first laws to improve conditions of work. England passed its first Factory Act in 1802 limiting the hours of work for children to twelve a day. In 1819, law forbade the employment of children under nine. Later laws regulated the employment of women and children in mines.

Many of the laws to protect workers have been due to the pressure from workers' trade unions. When the English workers first formed trade unions, employers called them 'unlawful combinations' and laws were passed to curb such 'evils'. But by 1824 the workers succeeded in getting laws against unions repealed and there was a remarkable growth in unions for all the trades.

It may be hard to believe today, but it is true, that the English industrial workers did not have the right to vote in those days. In the beginning in fact, the population of new industrial cities had no representation in Parliament at all. In the thirties and forties of the 19th century, a movement known as the 'Chartist Movement', was launched to get the right of vote for workers. Though the movement declined by the 'fifties of the 19th century, it left its influence and through the Acts of 1867, 1882, 1918 and 1929 all adult citizens were enfranchised. The English workers also won the right not only to organize trade unions but also the right to strike to force employers to concede their demands.

The idea that the workers' case must be heard in any dispute met with opposition everywhere. Workers in France and

7.8
Police trying to stop a workers' demonstration in London in 1886. Police and soldiers were used to put down workers' strikes and movements.

Germany got the right to form labour unions in the late 19th century. In the United States, where unions were frowned upon for almost a century, workers did not gain full legal rights until the early 20th century. Ther the right to form unions, to strike, and to bargain with employers on the conditions of work was legalized and this was followed by other laws that brought more benefits to employees.

The many benefits that workers and all salaried people enjoy in most industrialized countries today are due directly or indirectly to the efforts to correct the terrible conditions that the Industrial Revolution brought about.

Government Responsibility and Industrialization

Protection for industrial workers could not have taken place without a change in

the ideas of the responsibilities of governments. When the Industrial Revolution was gaining strength in England—and the same was generally true in other countries—the growing belief was that governments should not interfere with business and industry. The theory known as *laissez faire* or 'let us alone', was then a kind of religion among capitalists. According to the *laissez faire* idea, the businessman should be free to look after his own interests. Only the unwritten law of supply and demand should determine the size of his profits. The same unwritten law would determine the fate of the worker, whether he had a job, what would be his working conditions and salary. The famous economist Adam Smith voiced this idea in 1776 in a book called *The Wealth of Nations*, and it had many supporters, too.

The *laissez faire* doctrine was opposed by many people. Gradually, almost all the countries came to accept the idea that the state has a legitimate right and duty to regulate the economy. The Factory Acts in England and many laws dealing with the economy in all countries were a consequence of this. Today one rarely hears a voice in defence of *laissez faire*. Gradually, the state's role in economic development has also come to be recognized. This is true particularly of the developing countries that cannot modernize their economies without a comprehensive and large-scale effort on the part of the state. In fact, in these countries, it is the state, rather than the private capitalist, that is the main agency for economic development.

The Rise of Socialism

The greatest challenge to *laissez faire*, and to capitalism itself, has come from the idea of socialism, which grew in the beginning as a reaction against the evils of capitalism. The idea appealed particularly to workers. Through their struggles, they were able to achieve much improvement in their living conditions. However, they came to believe that, for basic improvement in their life, socialism or a complete re-ordering of society was essential. You will read about ideas of socialism and movements based on those ideas later.

The Industrial Revolution that began in England in about 1750 was a revolution in man's ways of producing goods and services. Abolition of medieval, antiquated social, economic and political systems, and industrialization to lead to an era of shared plenty became the declared aims of one society after another who emerged as nations.

Ever since 1750, man has increasingly used machines and mechanical power to do the work that he formerly did with his own muscles and the help of animals. Meantime, the machines invented by man have become more and more complex and provided him with goods and services that could not otherwise be produced at all. Also, machines have increased the amount of goods man can turn out in a given time, and enabled people to raise their level of living.

Industrialization and capitalism brought benefits as well as hardships and evils to man—unemployment, smoky, crowded cities, unhealthy living and working conditions, rivalry and conflict between nations. As working men got the right to vote and elect their representatives in government, they forced the passage of laws that eliminated many of the early evils that industrialization had brought about. Ideas of socialism also arose which,

while recognizing the importance of machines and making them even better, aimed at solving the problems created by capitalism, by building a new social order. But many problems remain. The unsolved problems are a challenge to all nations.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Explain the meaning of the following terms :
   Industrial Revolution, capital, capitalism, socialism, protective tariff, *laissez faire*.
2. What conditions are most favourable or essential for industrialization ?
3. Give examples to show that the Industrial Revolution with its demand for raw materials and markets made nations more dependent on one another.
4. Describe the conditions which prevailed in industrial cities and factories as the Industrial Revolution spread. How were these conditions slowly improved ?

Things to do

1. Make a Time Line showing the most important inventions from 1750 to 1870.
2. Make a bulletin board display of pictures of machines that revolutionized manufacturing, farming, transportation and communication during the first hundred years after the Industrial Revolution began.
3. Write a paper of 250-400 words on the subject: 'The Industrial Revolution was a Mixed Blessing'.

Things to think about and discuss

1. What are the main features which distinguish capitalism from feudalism ?
2. How did the growth of trade unions help to put on end to the idea of *laissez faire* ?
3. Why does industrialization affect farming, transportation, communication, trade and how does it result in the need for more education ?
4. How does industrialization help in raising the level or the standard of living ?
5. Study the weaknesses and disadvantages of producing goods and services under the capitalist system of production. What are the advantages that a socialist system can have over a society based on capitalism ?
6. Would you say that industrialization was 'a natural step' in man's progress ? Why or why not ?

CHAPTER 8

Revolutionary and Nationalist Movements

IN CHAPTERS 6 and 7 you learned about the rise of a new economic system in the world. In this chapter you will read of the developments that transformed the political systems of many countries of Europe and of the Americas in the 18th and 19th centuries. The basic features of these developments were the growth of democratic political systems, nationalism and socialism. Together with the Industrial Revolution, they brought about great changes and helped to determine people's thought and conditions of life for a long time to come. These developments began first in certain parts of Europe. Since then, particularly from the 19th century, the establishment of democratic political systems and of independent states based on nationalism have been among the primary aims of peoples the world over. Simultaneously with these in some countries and later in other countries ideas of socialism have inspired movements of social equality.

You have read about the social and economic system called feudalism. Under feudalism, societies were divided into classes some of which were privileged while the others were exploited. A man's entire life was determined at the time of his birth, depending on the class into which he was born. You have read that the two main classes in the feudal society were feudal lords and serfs. The political systems of the time were also determined by the prevailing social and economic system. Most of the population was excluded from having any share in the governance of the country. Many kings claimed divine rights, that is, that their power was derived from God and not from any capability to rule. Their word was law. A French king declared, "I am the State".

The boundaries of states also were irrational. If you see old maps you will be able to recognize very few states of modern Europe. There were all kinds of states—empires, feudal estates, city-states. The territories within a state were not necessarily contiguous. The people inhabiting these states were not

homogeneous. Empires, for example, included territories far apart from each other and inhabited by people of different nationalities. Similarly, the territories inhabited by a homogeneous people were divided into a number of states, some under a local ruler, some under the Church and some as parts of an empire. You have read in Chapter 6 how as a result of many factors nation-states had begun to be formed. However, this process was limited to a few areas. Most of the European states for a long time to come had no rational basis.

You have read of the rise of new social groups and classes during the later Middle Ages and about the role played by the middle class in bringing about the Renaissance in Europe. In economic life, this class gradually became very important. However, it was obstructed in its growth by the outdated political systems based on privilege. It could grow only if it also held the political power. With the Industrial Revolution, the strength of this class increased further and the removal of the outdated political systems acquired urgency. The spread of the Industrial Revolution in many countries was slow because of the backward political system that prevailed there. Another important new class that arose, particularly after the Industrial Revolution, was the working class, or the industrial workers. This class also was opposed to the autocratic political systems. Serfdom had declined in some countries but in most other countries of Europe, it was still the dominant feature of the social system. There were many revolts of the serfs but they were suppressed. However, during the period from the 17th to the 19th centuries, there arose movements in different parts of Europe to overthrow the existing political systems. The first successful revolution which overthrew the autocratic monarchy took place in England in the 17th century, as you have seen in Chapter 6.

Simultaneously, there was also the rise and growth of national consciousness and movements to unite the different territories inhabited by the people of a nation if they were divided into different states, and to overthrow foreign imperial rule if the territories of a nation were part of a larger empire ruled by an alien emperor.

The Renaissance had inaugurated an era of questioning the established beliefs. Gradually, this questioning covered every aspect of thought and belief. The period after the 16th century witnessed an intellectual revolution when all the existing beliefs based on faith came under heavy attack. Great progress was made in various sciences, which also undermined the existing beliefs. The new ideas were characterized by rationalism and were increasingly concerned with secular affairs. Because of the growing emphasis on reason, the period of the 18th century in European history is called the *Age of Reason* or the *Age of Enlightenment*. Gradually the beliefs that permitted people to be divided into higher or lower groups on the basis of birth, and into privileged groups and others, and the hold of the Church in the sphere of ideas, were undermined. The new ideas were ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. Thus arose ideas of freedom, democracy and equality, which became the rallying slogans of peoples everywhere. Simultaneously, there also arose ideas of nationalism which brought a sense of unity and oneness to the people forming a nation and the desire to organize themselves into

independent states with their distinctive national identities.

Movements arose in many parts of Europe and in North America to overthrow the existing autocratic political systems and replace them by democratic political system and to abolish privileges and establish the equality of political rights. These movements which began earlier became powerful forces in the 19th century Europe. In this chapter you will read about some revolutions that led to the overthrow of autocratic governments and their replacement by democratic forms of government. You will also read about some successful movements of national independence and national unification. In the last section, you will read about the emergence of ideas of socialism and about the movements based on those ideas which took shape.

Changes in political and social systems have often been brought about by revolutions. A *revolution*, as you know from your study of the Industrial Revolution, means a drastic or radical change. A revolution can be the sudden overthrow of an established government or system by force and bloodshed; it can also be a great change that comes slowly and peacefully. The developments described in this chapter were, in some respects, rapid and accompanied by violence but many of the lasting changes they brought about have taken place gradually and without bloodshed. However, you should remember that every change of government is not a revolution. A revolution involves a fundamental change in the entire political system of a country, a change in the nature of government, in the class or classes that hold political power, and also in the aims of the government.

People do not usually revolt against a government or a certain system unless they believe that it is no longer possible to live in the old way. Revolutions occur when an existing system becomes unbearable to a vast majority of the people. This, in itself, makes conditions 'ripe' for setting up a new system.

Revolutions are 'contagious'. Revolutionary ideas originating in one place may spread to other places very fast and influence the thinking and actions of peoples suffering under oppressive governments in other lands. Revolutions have played an essential role in the development of human societies. Without them, one kind of system, however unsuitable for the times it might be, would continue for ever, and there would be no progress.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

While some Englishmen were battling at home for improvements in Parliament and reforms in religion, others were adventuring across the Atlantic to establish colonies and trade in the Americas. In a previous chapter you have read about the discovery and exploration of the Americas. In the 16th century, European countries began to make settlements there. In North America, colonies were established by France, Holland and Spain as well as by England. In the 18th century, England drove France out of the eastern part of the continent and Canada. She had earlier taken New Netherlands from the Dutch, changing its name to New York.

The English Colonies in America

By the middle of the 18th century there were 13 English colonies in North America

along the Atlantic Coast. Landless peasants, people seeking religious freedom, traders, and profiteers had settled there. The bulk of the population consisted of independent farmers. Infant industries had developed in such products as wool, flax, and leather. In the north there were fishing and ship-building. In the south, large plantations like feudal manors had grown up where tobacco and cotton were grown with slave labour brought from Africa.

Each colony had a local assembly elected by qualified voters. These assemblies enacted laws concerning local matters, and levied taxes. However, they were under the rule of the mother country. By the 18th century, the colonists found the laws which the English government imposed upon them more and more objectionable. The idea of being an independent nation grew and developed into the Revolutionary War in which the colonists gained their independence.

Causes of the War of American Independence

The colonial policy of England in economic matters was the primary cause of resentment in the American colonies. England's policies did not encourage the American colonies to develop an economy of their own. The English Parliament had forbidden them to use non-British ships in their trade. Certain products, such as tobacco, cotton and sugar, could be exported only to England. Heavy duties were imposed on the import of goods in the colonies from other places. The colonies were also forbidden to start certain industries, for example, iron works and textiles. They were forced to import these goods from England. Thus, in every possible way, the growth of industry and trade in the colonies was impeded.

The English also angered the colonists by issuing a proclamation to prevent them from moving west into new lands. English aristocrats had bought lands in America and got rents from the farmers. They wanted to keep the colonists as renters.

As a result of continuous wars in Europe, the English government was burdened with debt. It needed money. In 1765, the English Parliament passed the Stamp Act which imposed stamp taxes on

8.1 Thomas Paine—an international revolutionary who published a constant stream of articles and pamphlets (including *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man* and urged people in England, America and France to fight for their liberty.

all business transactions in the American colonies. Revenue stamps up to 20 shillings were to be affixed to legal documents and other papers. This Act aroused violent resentment among all sections of the colonists and led them to boycott English goods. There were uprisings in many towns and tax-collectors were killed. The colonists claimed that, since English Parliament had no representatives from the colonies, it had no right to levy taxes on them. The revenue from these taxes, they said, was used not in the interests of the colonies but of English.

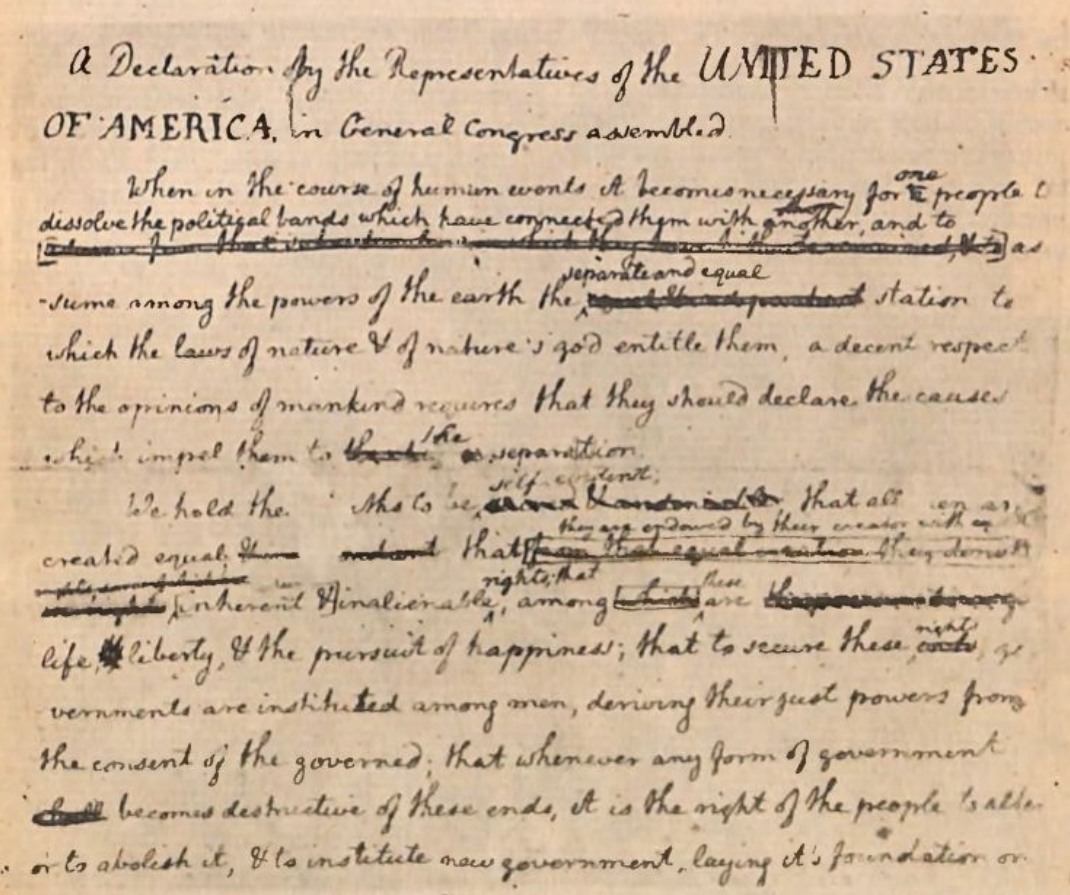
The American revolutionaries were inspired by the ideas of the English philosophers of the 17th century. These philosophers—Locke, Harrington, Milton—believed that men had certain fundamental rights which no government had the right to infringe. American thinkers, especially Thomas Jefferson, were also inspired by what French

8.2 Riots over the Stamp Act. Demonstrations broke out throughout the English colonies in North America the day the Stamp Act came into effect. The illustration shows burning of stamps in the streets.

philosophers were saying and writing at that time. Jefferson asserted the colonists' right to rebellion, and encouraged their increasing desire for independence. Support for independence was forcefully expressed by Thomas Paine, who detested the inequalities of English society, and had come to America. In a pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*, he wrote, 'It was repugnant to reason to suppose that this continent can long remain subject to any external power...there is something absurd in supposing a Continent to be perpetually governed by an island'.

The Massachusetts Assembly

The leaders in the Massachusetts colony called together representatives from other colonies to consider their common problems. They agreed and declared that the English Parliament had no right to levy taxes on them. 'No taxation without representation' was the slogan they adopted. And they threatened to stop



A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inherent & inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on

8.3 The first few lines of the 'Declaration of Independence' as drafted by Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson's draft was adopted, with a few minor changes, on 4 July 1776.

the import of British goods. The threat led English to repeal the Stamp Act, but Parliament still insisted that it had the right to levy taxes. Then Parliament imposed a tax on consumer goods coming into the colonies, such as paper, glass, tea and paint. Again the colonies objected saying that only their own assemblies had the right to raise money through taxes. In protest the colonies cut down the English imports by one-half. The English withdrew the plan, leaving only the tax on tea to assert their right to levy taxes.

The Boston Tea Party

The tax on tea led to trouble. In 1773, several colonies refused to unload the tea coming in English ships. In Boston, when the governor ordered a ship to be unloaded, a group of citizens, dressed as American Indians, boarded the ship and dumped the crates of tea into the water. This incident is known as 'the Boston Tea Party'. The English government then closed the port of Boston to all trade and precipitated the uprising of the colonies.

The Philadelphia Congress and the Declaration of Independence

The representatives of the 13 American colonies met as a group in what is called the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia in 1774. This congress appealed to the English King to remove restrictions on industries and trade and not to impose any taxes without their consent. The King declared their action a mutiny and ordered troops to be sent to suppress it. The colonies then planned for military defence with local troops or militia. In 1775, the first battle of the revolution was fought when a thousand

8.4 John Trumbull's painting of the signing of the 'Declaration of Independence'. The painting shows standing centre, left to right, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingstone, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

English soldiers met the colonial militia in Lexington, Massachusetts.

On 4 July 1776, the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. It contained truly revolutionary ideas. The Declaration asserted 'that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator

8.5 A.M. Willard's 'The Spirit of 76', painted a century after the signing of the 'Declaration of Independence

with certain inalienable rights, that among these rights are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness'. The Declaration advanced the principle that the people are the source of authority and affirmed the people's right to set up their own government. The Declaration also stated that the American colonies had been oppressed by the English government and that 'these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states'. Up to this time the colonists had been fighting for their rights as Englishmen. After the Declaration in 1776, they fought for their right to be an independent nation.

The War of Independence

George Washington was put in command of the American forces. The first battles took place in and around Boston. Then English sent a force to Canada with the plan to march it south to meet another English force, and so cut the American colonies in half. But a English general spoiled the plan. As the English marched south, the Americans met and defeated them. This victory of the rough American militia-men against a trained British force gave the Americans confidence. The French government now decided to help the colonies with troops, supplies and funds—to embarrass English, France's old enemy. Other enemies of English—Spain and Holland—were soon fighting the English elsewhere.

Meanwhile, trouble was brewing for Britain at home. There was a threat of rebellion in Ireland; some leaders in

8.6 Surrender of Cornwallis, 1781

Parliament were opposing the war with the colonists. The war ended in 1781 when the English commander, Cornwallis, later to become governor-general in India, surrendered. Two years later, in 1783, the Treaty of Paris was signed and English recognized the independence of its 13 former colonies.

The American Constitution

When the war of independence started, each of the 13 colonies was a separate state with its own army, boundaries, customs duties and finances. But they co-operated against a common enemy. In 1781, as states of the United States, they united through a plan for a national government. A constitutional convention was called in Philadelphia to frame a new constitution, which came into effect in 1789. It established a republican form of government at a time when states in other parts of the world were governed by monarchies. The American Constitution set up a federal system under which powers were divided between a central or federal government and the state governments.

Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and his followers campaigned for the addition of a Bill of Rights to the federal constitution. This was done through ten amendments which guaranteed many rights to the American people. The most noted of these are freedom of speech, press and religion, and justice under law.

The constitution marked the emergence of the United States of America as a nation in world history. It was the first written republican constitution ever framed in history, which is still in operation.

Significance of the American Revolution

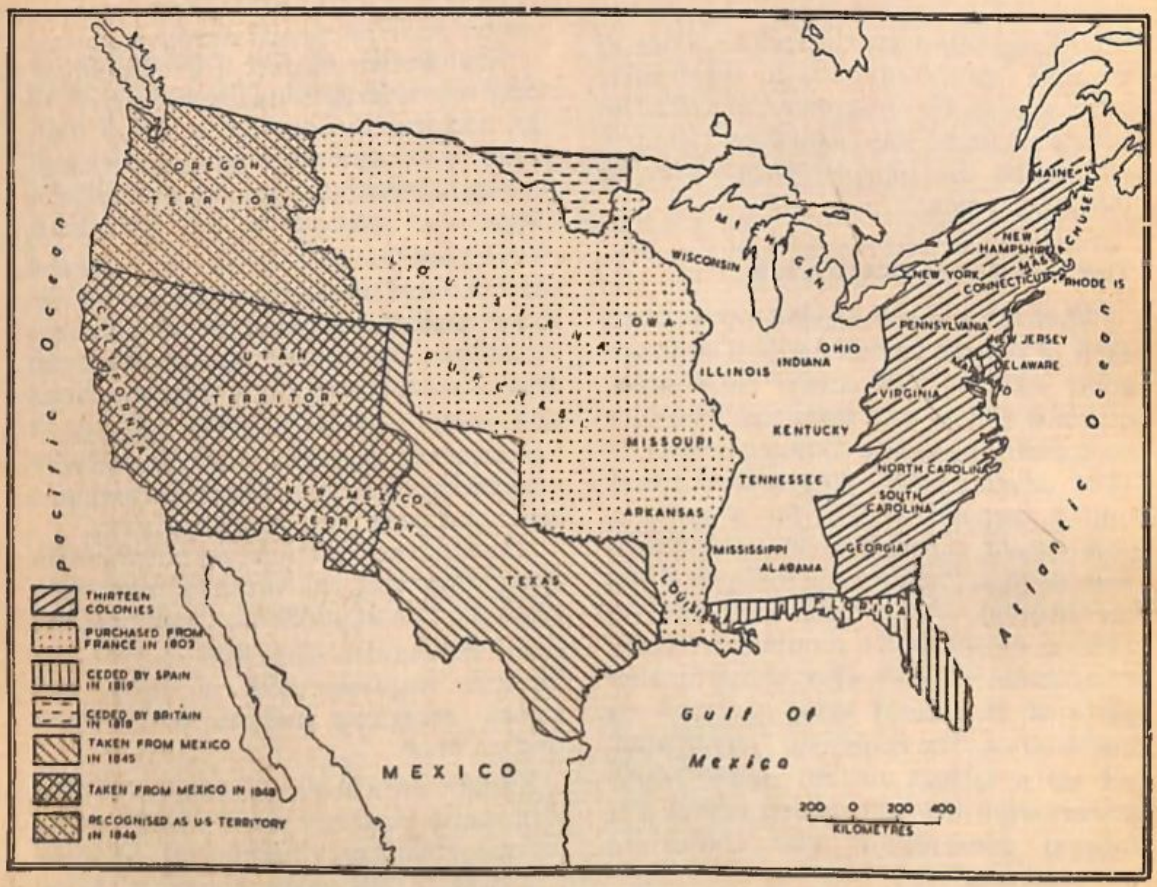
The words of the Declaration of Independence regarding the equality of all men and the 'inalienable rights' of man electrified the atmosphere in America and outside. Lafayette, the French general who fought on the side of American revolutionaries, was soon to become a hero of the French Revolution. Thomas Paine also participated in the French Revolution. By its example, the American Revolution inspired many revolutionaries in Europe later in the 19th century. It encouraged Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Central and South America to rebel and gain their independence.

The main achievement of the American Revolution was the establishment of a republic. This republic was, however, not truly democratic. The right to vote was limited. Negroes—most of them still slaves—American Indians, and women had no vote.

Election laws in all states favoured men of property for many years. But progress towards democracy had begun. In some states, state religion was abolished, along with religious qualifications for holding public offices.

The Growth of a Nation

Early in the 19th century, many new areas were added to the United States. The vast territory in the middle of the continent, known as Louisiana, was purchased from France. Florida was acquired from Spain. By the 1850's, after a war with Mexico, the United States had extended its boundaries to the Pacific Ocean. People had continued to move west. The westward expansion of the United States was at the expense of the



United States of America in about 1850

American Indians who were driven out of their territories and in the course of a few decades their population was reduced to an insignificant number. Increasing settlements in the west brought about increasing conflicts between the southern states that wanted to extend slavery to the western territories and the northern states that objected to a slave economy.

A change of revolutionary significance came with the Civil War when slave-owning states of the south seceded from the Union and set up a separate government. The Civil War raged from 1861 to 1865 and ended in the defeat of the southern states.

It was a victory for the capitalistic industrial states of the north over the slave-owning states of the south. The federal government abolished slavery. The abolition of slavery, however, did not end discrimination against the Black people and their struggle to make equal rights a reality continued.

8.7 The 'Declaration of Independence' stated, "All men are created equal". But slavery continued for about 90 years after the signing of the Declaration. It was finally abolished in December 1865. The picture shows a slave auction in 1853.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The French Revolution was brewing while the War of American Independence was being fought. Conditions in France were vastly different from those in the New World, but many of the same revolutionary ideas were at work. The French Revolution, however, was more world-shaking than the American. It became a widespread upheaval over which no one could remain neutral.

Social Conditions in the 18th-century France

To understand how and why the French Revolution occurred, we have to understand French society of that time. We have to realize also that conditions in France were no worse than the conditions that existed in other parts of Europe. Autocratic, extravagant rulers, privileged nobles and clergy, landless peasants, jobless workers, unequal taxation—the list of hardships endured by the common people is a very long one. France was a strong and powerful state in the 18th century. She had seized vast territories in North America, islands in the West Indies. However, despite its outward strength, the French monarchy was facing a crisis which was to lead to its destruction.

Privileged Classes or Estates

French society was divided into classes, or *estates*. There were two privileged

classes—the clergy and the nobility. These were known as the First Estate and the Second Estate respectively. The First Estate consisted of about 130,000 clerics. The nobility or Second Estate numbered about 80,000 families. People in these two classes were exempted from almost all taxes. They controlled most of the administrative posts and all the high-ranking posts in the army. In a population of 25,000,000 people, these two classes together owned about 40 per cent of the total land of France. Their incomes came primarily from their large land-holdings. A minority of these also depended on pensions and gifts from the king. They considered it beneath their dignity to trade or to be engaged in manufacture or to do any work.

The life of the nobility was everywhere characterized by extravagance and luxury. There were, of course, poorer sections in these two top estates. They were discontented and blamed the richer members of their class for their misery.

8.8 A cartoon showing the exploitation of the peasantry by the clergy and the nobility

The Third Estate

The rest of the people of France were called the Third Estate. They were the common people and numbered about 95 per cent of the total population. People of the Third Estate were the unprivileged people. However, there were many differences in their wealth and style of living.

The Peasants—The largest section of the Third Estate consisted of the peasants, almost 80 per cent of the total population of France. The lives of this vast class were wretched. Most of the peasants were free, unlike the serfs in the Middle Ages, and unlike the serfs in eastern Europe in the 18th century. Many owned their own lands. But a great majority of the French peasants were landless or had very small holdings. They could earn hardly enough for subsistence. The plight of the tenants and share-croppers was worse. After rents, the peasant's share was reduced to one-third or one-fourth of what he produced. The people who worked on land for wages lived on even less.

Certain changes in agriculture in the 18th century France further worsened the condition of the peasant. He could no longer take wood from the forests or graze his flocks on uncultivated land. The burden of taxation was intolerable. Besides taxes, there was also 'forced labour' which had been a feudal privilege

of the lord and which was more and more resorted to for public works. There were taxes for local roads and bridges, the church, and other needs of the community. A bad harvest under these conditions inevitably led to starvation and unrest.

The Middle Classes—Not all the people belonging to the Third Estate worked on the land. There were the artisans, workers and poor people living in towns and cities. Then there was the middle class or the *bourgeoisie*. This class consisted of the educated people—writers, doctors, judges, lawyers, teachers, civil servants—and the richer people who were merchants, bankers, and manufacturers. Economically, this class was the most important one. It was the forerunner of the builders of the industries which were to transform economic and social life in the 19th century.

The merchant-business groups, though new in history, had grown very important and rich, helped by the trade with French colonies in America. Since these people had money, the state, the clergy and the nobility were indebted to them. However, the middle class had no political rights. It had no social status, and its members had to suffer many humiliations.

The Artisans and City Workers—The condition of the city poor—workers and artisans—was inhuman in the 18th-century France. They were looked upon as inferior creatures without any rights. No worker could leave his job for another without the employer's consent and a certificate of good conduct. Workers not having a certificate could be arrested. They had to toil for long hours from early morning till late at night. They, too, paid heavy taxes.

The oppressed workers formed many secret societies and often resorted to strikes and rebellion. This group was to become the mainstay of the French Revolution, and the city of Paris with a population of more than 500,000 was to play an important part in it. In this number was an army of rebels, waiting for an opportunity to strike at the old order.

The Monarchy

At the head of the French state stood the king, an absolute monarch. Louis XVI was the king of France when the revolution broke out. He was a man of mediocre intelligence, obstinate and indifferent to the work of the government. Brain work, it is said, depressed him. His beautiful but 'empty-headed' wife, Marie Antoinette, squandered money on festivities and interfered in state appointments in order to promote her favourites. Louis, too, showered favours and pensions upon his friends. The state was always faced by financial troubles as one would expect. Keeping huge armies and waging wars made matters worse. Finally, it brought the state to bankruptcy.

The Intellecutal Movement

Discontent or even wretchedness is not enough to make a successful revolution. Someone must help the discontented to focus on an 'enemy' and provide ideals to fight for. In other words, revolutionary thinking and ideas must precede revolutionary action. France in the 18th century had many revolutionary thinkers. Without the ideas spread by these philosophers, the French Revolution would simply have been an outbreak of violence.

Rationalism: the Age of Reason

Because of the ideas expressed by the French intellectuals, the 18th century has been called the *Age of Reason*. Christianity had taught that man was born to suffer. The French revolutionary philosophers asserted that man was born to be happy. They believed that man can attain happiness if reason is allowed to destroy prejudice and reform man's institutions. They either denied the existance of God or ignored Him. In place of God they asserted the doctrine of 'Nature' and the need to understand its laws. They urged faith in reason. The power of reason alone, they said, was sufficient to build a perfect society.

Attack on the Clergy

The clergy were the first to feel the brunt of the French philosophers. A long series of scientific advances dating from the Renaissance helped in their campaign against the clergy. Voltaire, one of the most famous French writers of the time, though not an atheist, believed all religions absurd and contrary to reason. After Voltaire, other philosophers, atheists and materialists, gained popularity. They believed that man's destiny lay in this world rather than in heaven. Writings attacking religion fed the fires of revolution because the Church gave support to autocratic monarchy and the old order.

8.9 Voltaire

The Economists

The French economists of the time were called 'physiocrats'. They believed in *laissez faire* about which you have read in the last chapter. According to this theory you may remember, a person must be left free to manage and dispose of his propert

8.10 Rousseau

in the way he thinks best. Like the English and American revolutionaries before them, the physiocrats said that taxes should be imposed only with the consent of those on whom they were levied. These ideas were a direct denial of the privileges and feudal rights that protected the upper classes.

Democracy

The philosopher-writer, Montesquieu, thought about the kind of government that is best suited to man and outlined the principles of constitutional monarchy. However, it was Jean Jacques Rousseau who asserted the doctrine of popular sovereignty and democracy. He said, 'Man is born free, yet everywhere he is in chains.' He talked of the 'state of nature' when man was free, and said that freedom was lost following the emergence of property. He recognized property in modern societies as a 'necessary evil'. What was needed, said Rousseau, was a new 'social contract' to guarantee the freedom, equality and happiness which man had enjoyed in the state of nature. Rousseau's theories also contained a principle that had been written into the American Declaration of Independence: no political system can maintain itself without 'the consent of the governed'.

Outbreak of the Revolution

In 1789, Louis XVI's need for money compelled him to agree to a meeting of the

8.11 J.L. David's painting of the meeting of the National Assembly on 20 June 1789. The members of the National Assembly took an oath at this meeting, held in a tennis court, that they would continue to meet till a constitution was secured.

States General– the old feudal assembly. Louis wanted to obtain its consent for new loans and taxes. All three Estates were represented in it but each one held a separate meeting. On 17 June 1789, members of the Third Estate, claiming to represent 96 per cent of the nation's population, declared themselves the National Assembly. On 20 June, they found their meeting-hall occupied by royal guards but, determined to meet, they moved to the nearby royal tennis court to work out a constitution. Louis then made preparations to break up the Assembly. Troops were called; rumours spread that leading members of the Assembly would soon be arrested. This enraged the people, who began to gather in their thousands. They were soon joined by the guards. They surrounded the Bastille, a state prison, on 14 July. After a four-hour siege, they broke open the doors, freeing all the prisoners. The fall of the Bastille symbolized the fall of autocracy. July 14 is celebrated every year as a national holiday in France.

After 14 July 1789, Louis XVI was king only in name. The National Assembly began to enact laws. Following the fall of the Bastille, the revolt spread to other towns and cities and finally into the countryside. The National Assembly adopted the famous *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*. It specified the equality of all men before the law, eligibility of all citizens for all pubic offices, freedom

8.12 Storming of the Bastille

8.13 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen', adopted by the National Assembly on 26 August 1789. Article 1 of the Declaration stated : "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights."

from arrest or punishment without proven cause, freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Most important of all, to the middle class, it required equitable distribution of the burdens of taxation and rights of private property. The revolutionary importance of this declaration for Europe cannot be overestimated. Every government in Europe was based on privilege. If these ideas were applied, the entire old order of Europe would be destroyed.

War and End of Monarchy

The people of France were soon involved in a war to defend the Revolution and the nation. Many nobles and clerics fled the country and encouraged foreign governments to intervene in France against the Revolution. The king and queen tried to escape from France in disguise but they were recognized and brought back as captives and traitors.

The old National Assembly was replaced

by a Legislative Assembly. This Assembly took over the property of those people who had fled. It sent word to the Austrian emperor, who was mobilizing support against France, to renounce every treaty directed against the French nation. When the emperor refused, the Legislative Assembly declared war.

Soon France was fighting Austria, Prussia, and Savoy in Italy. The three were supported by an army of the French exiles.

France had destroyed feudalism and monarchy and founded new institutions based on liberty and equality, whereas in these countries the old way of life remained. The commander-in-chief of the Austro-Prussian forces stated that the aim was to suppress anarchy in France and to restore the king's authority. The French revolutionaries replied by offering 'fraternity and assistance' to all people wishing to destroy the old order in their countries.

8.14 J.L. David's sketch of Marie Antoinette on the way to the execution

The king and queen were tried and executed in 1793. This was followed by a declaration of war against Britain, Holland, Spain and Hungary. Then, a radical group, the Jacobins, believing in direct democracy, came to power. Fearing that the Revolution was in danger, this group took to strong measures to crush forces inimical to the Revolution. In 14 months, some 17,000 people, including those who were innocent, were tried and executed. Some people have called it the "Reign of Terror". Later, a new constitution was drawn up. But the army became increasingly powerful and this led to the rise of Napoleon, who was soon to declare himself Emperor of the French Republic.

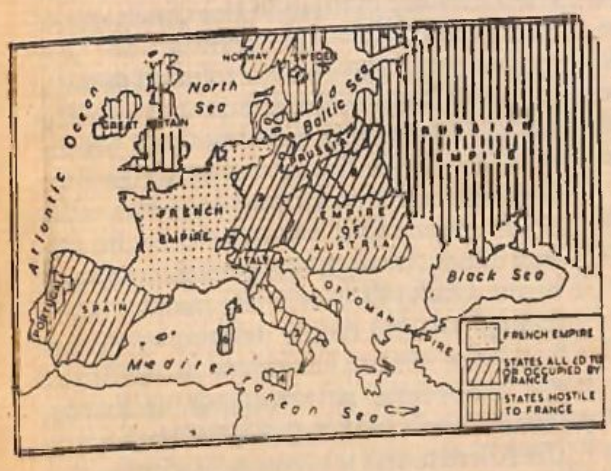
The Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars

From 1792 to 1815, France was engaged in war almost continuously. It

8.15 J.L. David's painting of Napoleon, 1800

was a war between France and other states. Some historians have termed it as an international civil war because it was fought between revolutionary France and countries upholding the old order. In this war, France was alone. However, until Napoleon became emperor, almost every enlightened person in the world sympathized with the French Revolution.

Between 1793 and 1796 French armies conquered almost all of western Europe. When Napoleon pressed on to Malta, Egypt and Syria (1797-99), the French were ousted from Italy. After Napoleon seized power, France recovered the territories she had lost and defeated Austria in 1805, Prussia in 1806, and Russia in 1807. On the sea the French could not score against the stronger British navy. Finally, an alliance of almost all Europe defeated France at Leibzig in 1813. These allied forces later occupied Paris, and Napoleon was defeated. His attempt at recovery was foiled at the battle of Waterloo in June 1815. The peace settlement, which involved all Europe, took place at the Congress of Vienna.



Europe in 1810. 1. Denmark; 2. Confederation of the Rhine; 3. Kingdom of Naples; 4. Kingdom of Sicily; 5. Corsica; 6. Sardinia; 7. Switzerland; 8. Grand Duchy of Warsaw

Consequences of the Revolution

A major result of the Revolution was the destruction of feudalism in France. All the laws of the old feudal regime were annulled. Church lands and lands held in common by the community were bought by the middle classes. The lands of nobles were confiscated. Priviledged classes were abolished. After Napoleon seized power, the Napoleonic Code was introduced. Many elements of this Code remained in force for a long time; some of them exist even to this day. Another lasting result of the Revolution in France was the building up of a new economic system in place of the feudal system which had been overthrown. This system was capitalism about which you have read in Chapter 7. Even the restored monarchy could not bring back the feudal system or destroy the new economic institutions that had come into being.

The French Revolution gave the term 'nation' its modern meaning. A nation is not the territory that the people belonging to it inhabit but the people themselves. France was not merely the territories known as France but the 'French people'. From this followed the idea of sovereignty, that a nation recognizes no law or authority above its own. And if a nation is sovereign, that means the people constituting the nation are the source of all power and authority. There cannot be any rulers above the people, only a republic in which the government derives its authority from the people and is answerable to the people. It is interesting to remember that when Napoleon became emperor he called himself the 'Emperor of

the French Republic'. Such was the strength of the idea of people's sovereignty. It was this idea of the people being the sovereign that gave France her military strength. The entire nation was united behind the army which consisted of revolutionary citizens. In a war in which almost all of Europe was ranged against France, she would have had no chance with just a mercenary army.

Under the Jacobin constitution, all people were given the right to vote and the right of insurrection. The constitution stated that the government must provide the people with work or livelihood. The happiness of all was proclaimed as the aim of government. Though it was never really put into effect, it was the first genuinely democratic constitution in history. The government abolished slavery in the French colonies. Napoleon's rise to power was a step backward. However, though he destroyed the Republic and established an empire, the idea of the republic could not be destroyed. After the defeat of Napoleon, the old ruling dynasty of France was restored to power. However, within a few years, in 1830, there was another outbreak of revolution. In 1848, the monarchy was again overthrown though it soon reappeared. Finally, in 1871, the Republic was again proclaimed.

The Revolution had come about with the support and blood of common people—the city poor and the peasants. In 1792, for the first time in history, workers, peasants and other non-propertied classes were given equal political rights.

The right to vote and elect representatives did not solve the problems of the common people. The peasants got their lands. But to the workers and artisans—the people who were the backbone of the revolutionary movement—the Revolution did not bring real equality. To them, real equality could come only with economic equality. France soon became one of the first countries where the ideas of social equality, of socialism, gave rise to a new kind of political movement.

REVOLUTIONARY AND NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS AFTER 1815

Impact of French Revolution on the World

The French Revolution had been a worldshaking event. For years to come its direct influence was felt in many parts of the world. It inspired revolutionary movements in almost every country of Europe and in South and Central America. For a long time the French Revolution became the classic example of a revolution which people of many nations tried to emulate. The impact of the French Revolution can be summed up in the words of T. Kolokotrones, one of the revolutionary fighters in the Greek war of independence: "According to my judgement, the French Revolution and the doings of Napoleon opened the eyes of the world. The nations knew nothing before, and the people thought that kings were gods upon the earth and that they were bound to say that whatever they did was well done. Through this present change it is more difficult to rule the people." Even though the old ruling dynasty of France had been restored to power in 1815, and the autocratic governments of Europe found themselves safe for the time being, the rulers found it increasingly difficult to rule the people.

Some of the changes that took place in many parts of Europe and the Americas in the early 19th century were the

8.16 Painting by the Spanish artist Goya : the killing of Spanish guerillas by French soldiers. Under Napoleon, the revolutionary war became a war of conquest.

immediate, direct consequences of the Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. The wars in which France was engaged with other European powers had resulted in the French occupation of vast areas of Europe for some time. The French soldiers, wherever they went, carried with them ideas of liberty and equality, shaking the old feudal order. They destroyed serfdom in areas which came under their occupation and modernized the systems of administration. Under Napoleon, the French had become conquerors instead of liberators. The countries which organized popular resistance against the French occupation carried out reforms in their social and political system. The leading powers of Europe did not succeed in restoring the old order either in France or in the countries that the Revolution had reached. The political and social systems of the 18th century had received a heavy blow. They were soon to die in most of Europe under the impact of the revolutionary movements that sprang up everywhere in Europe.

Revolutions in America

The impact of the Revolution was felt on the far away American continent. Revolutionary France had abolished slavery in her colonies. The former French colony of Haiti became a republic. This was

the first republic established by the black people, formerly slaves, in the Americas. Inspired by this example, revolutionary movements arose in the Americas to overthrow foreign rule, to abolish slavery and to establish independent republics. The chief European imperialist powers in Central and South America were Spain and Portugal. Spain had been occupied by France, and Portugal was involved in a conflict with France. During the early 19th century, these two imperialist countries were cut off from their colonies, with the result that most of the Portuguese and Spanish colonies in Central and South America became independent. The movements for independence in these countries had earlier been inspired by the successful War of American Independence. The French Revolution ensured their success. By the third decade of the 19th century, almost entire Central and South America had been liberated from the Spanish and the Portuguese rule and a number of independent republics were established. In these republics slavery was abolished. It, however, persisted in the United States for a few more decades where it was finally abolished following the Civil War about which you have read before in this chapter. Simon Bolivar, Bernardo O'Higgins and San Martin were the great leaders in South America at this time.

Revolutionary Movements in Europe

The period after 1815 saw the emergence of revolutionary activity in every country in Europe. In some countries, the aim of the revolutionaries was the overthrow of autocratic rulers and the abolition of serfdom; in some it was the overthrow of foreign rule and in some others it was social, political and economic reforms. Nationalism emerged as a major force in this period. However, it is interesting to see that this nationalism was neither exclusive nor chauvinistic. Revolutionaries fighting for independence did not fight for their independence alone or against the despotism of their rulers only. They did not want their nation to dominate other nations. They were in fact inspired by the aim of fighting against despotism everywhere. They were united into a kind of international brotherhood of peoples against all despots. The South American revolutionaries O'Higgins, Simon Bolivar and San Martin fought for the independence of many countries in South America. Mazzini, one of the foremost leaders of the struggle for Italian unification and independence, formed a number of organizations such as Young Poland, Young Germany and Young Italy for the liberation of these countries. Garibaldi, another great leader of the Italian revolutionaries, fought for the freedom of the peoples of South America.

The great English poet Lord Byron was also one of these revolutionaries. He fought for the freedom of Greece and died there. He declared that he would war with every despotism in every nation. These words of Byron best sum up the attitude of a large number of revolutionaries of the time.

However, as the revolutionaries were united in their common aim of overthrowing despotism everywhere, the autocratic governments also were united to suppress every revolt and movement against any despotism. In 1815, the rulers of Austria, Britain, Russia and Prussia formed an alliance. One of the major declared aims of this alliance was to suppress any attempt by the people to

8.17 Allegorical representation of equality between men

overthrow a ruler whom these countries considered the 'legitimate' ruler of the country. The new ruler of France also soon joined this alliance. Austria, Russia and Prussia had formed another alliance which they called the *Holy Alliance*. This alliance which many other rulers also joined was even more openly opposed to democratic ideas and movements than the first. After 1815 the rulers of Europe tried to suppress all movements for freedom and democracy in their own as well as in other countries. In 1821, for example, Austria sent her armies into Naples and Piedmont in Italy to suppress the uprisings that had taken place there. In many countries of Europe, the freedom of the press was abolished and a large number of spies were recruited to keep watch on the activities of the revolutionaries.

The oppressive measures introduced by the rulers failed to curb the revolutionary movements in Europe. In 1830 revolutions broke out in a number of countries. The French monarch fled away to England and was succeeded by Louis Philippe who promised to rule according to the wishes of the people. There was a revolt in Belgium for freedom from Holland. Insurrections broke out in various states of Italy and Germany and in Poland. Although most of these revolts were suppressed, the independence of two new

nations was recognized– of Greece in 1830 and of Belgium in 1839.

Revolutions of 1848

Within a few years after the revolts of 1830 had been suppressed, the revolutionary movements in Europe again gained momentum. In 1848, revolutions broke out in almost every country of Europe, which dealt a mortal blow to the countries of the Holy Alliance. Early in 1848, there was a revolt in Italy. In February, revolution broke out in France and Louis Philippe who had been installed as king after the 1830 revolution fled away. France again became a republic for some time but power was usurped by Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, popularly known as Napoleon III, a nephew of Napoleon, in 1852. France finally in 1871 when the empire of Louis Bonaparte collapsed.

The revolution in France was soon followed by uprisings in many towns of Germany. The rulers of many German states, including Prussia which was a member of the Holy Alliance, agreed to introduce many reforms. Simultaneously, there were uprisings in Vienna, the capital, and in other towns of the Austrian empire, another member of the Holy Alliance. Metternich, the Chancellor of the empire, who was the most hated man in Europe, had to flee. The Austrian empire in those days was a large empire ruling over many nations of Europe. It ruled over Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia,

8.18 Revolutions broke out all over Europe in 1848. The people setting the throne of the French king, Louis Philippe, on fire.

8.19 After an uprising in Berlin, the people took possession of the city on 18 March 1848.

Rumania, Poland, Yugoslavia and many other areas. Revolts had broken out in all the subject nations of the empire as well as in Austria. Even though these revolts did not succeed, the empire was badly shaken.

The revolutions of 1848 failed to overthrow the established oppressive regimes of Europe though they considerably weakened them. The most significant aspect of the 1848 revolutions was the emergence of a new political force in Europe. You have read in Chapter 7 about the rise of a new social class in Europe following the Industrial Revolution—the working class. The workers were a major force in the revolutions of 1848. Their aim was not merely the overthrow of autocracies but also the destruction of the economic system that had grown with the Industrial Revolution—capitalism. Other

8.20 Scene of an uprising in Vienna, May 1848

participants in the revolutions—the capitalists, the merchants and other people belonging to the middle class—wanted constitutional reforms. They looked upon the demands of the workers for social revolution with horror. When the revolutionary movements were at their peak, they decided to compromise with the rulers.

Growth of Democracy in England

You have read in Chapter 6 that the first successful revolution that overthrew the autocratic monarchy took place in England in the seventeenth century. This had resulted in the establishment of the supremacy of Parliament in England. However, Parliament at that time was not a truly democratic institution. The right to vote was limited to a very small percentage of the population. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the demand for making Parliament a democratic institution grew. Campaigns to extend the right to vote to every citizen were waged. These campaigns were led by radical leaders who represented the interests of workers, and the city poor, and by those representing the industrialists. Until 1832, representation in Parliament was based not on population but on election districts—counties and boroughs. Many of these were no longer populated excepted for a few houses, while new towns and cities with large populations had no representation. Under the Act of 1832, the old unpopulated areas or 'rotten boroughs', as they were called, were abolished and their seats were given to new towns and cities. At this time also, the right to vote was extended to those who owned or rented a house of a certain value in the towns or in villages. This formed only about 10 per cent of the population. You have read of the Chartist Movement which was launched to get the right to vote for workers. Though the movement declined in the 1850's, it left its influence and through the Acts of 1867, 1882, 1918 and 1929, all adult citizens were enfranchised. Thus it was over 200 years after Parliament became supreme that it became also a truly representative body of the British people.

Unification of Germany

One of the major features of the 19th century history of Europe was the struggles for national unification and independence. The achievement of independence by Greece and Belgium has been mentioned before. Germany and Italy

were the other two important nations which emerged as united, independent states in the 19th century.

In the 18th century, Germany was divided into a number of states. Some of these states were very small and did not extend beyond the limits of a city. During the Napoleonic wars, many of these states ceased to exist. At the end of the wars there were still thirty-eight independent states in Germany. Among them Prussia, Wurtemberg, Bavaria, and Saxony were fairly large. Militarily and in extent, Prussia was the most powerful. It was also the most reactionary. The big landlords of Prussia known as *junkers* formed the dominant section in Prussian society. Prussia was also one of the leaders of the Holy Alliance.

The division of Germany into a number of states had hampered the economic development of Germany. The social and political system in these states was also very backward. With the growth of national consciousness, particularly after the French Revolution, the people of these states had started demanding the national unification of Germany, establishment of democratic government and social and economic reforms. In 1815, the German states along with Austria were organised into a Germanic Confederation. However, each state tried to preserve its independence and its oppressive political and social system.

In 1848 revolts occurred in every German state and the rulers were forced to grant democratic constitutions. To unite Germany and to frame a constituion for the united Germany, a constituent assembly met in Frankfurt. The initial success of the revolts had made the German democrats and nationalists think that victory had been achieved. While they debated the clauses of the constitution, the rulers prepared themselves to suppress the movement. The Frankfurt Assembly proposed the unification of Germany as a constitutional monarchy under the King of Prussia who would become emperor of Germany. However, the King of Prussia declined the offer. He did not wish to accept the crown from the elected representatives of the people. Repression soon followed and even the rights that people had won in the initial stages of the revolution were taken away. Thousands of German revolutionaries had to flee the country and live in exile.

With the failure of the revolution of 1848 to unify Germany, one phase in the struggle for unification came to an end. Now Germany was to be unified not into a democratic country by the efforts of revolutionaries but by the rulers into a militaristic empire. The leader of this policy was Bismarck who belonged to a Prussian aristocratic family. He wanted to preserve the predominance of the landed aristocrats and the army in the united German state and to achieve the unification of Germany under the leadership of the Prussian monarchy. He described his policy of unification as one of 'blood and iron'.

The policy of 'blood and iron' meant a policy of war. The first aim he pursued was the elimination of Austria from the Germanic Confederation. He aligned with Austria in a war against Denmark over the possession of Schleswig and Holstein. After Denmark's defeat, he entered into an alliance with Italy against Austria, defeated Austria and dissolved the Germanic Confederation. Thus Austria was separated from other German states. In place of the old Confederation, he united 22 states of Germany into North

German Confederation in 1866. The constitution of this Confederation made the king of Prussia the hereditary head of the Confederation.

The unification of Germany was completed as a result of a war between Prussia and France. In 1870, Louis Bonaparte, whose power had begun to collapse, declared war on Prussia in the hope of maintaining his empire through a military victory. The war was partly provoked by Bismarck. It proved disastrous for the empire of Louis Bonaparte. The French armies were defeated and the French emperor was captured. After her defeat, France finally became a republic. Germany's unification was completed as a result of the war which enabled Bismarck to absorb the remaining German states into a united Germany. The formal ceremony at which King William I of Prussia took the title of German Emperor was not held on German soil. It took place at Versailles in France, in the palace of the French kings.

After her unification, Germany emerged as a very strong power in Europe. It underwent heavy industrialization in a very short period and soon joined the scramble for colonies. However, the militarism which made Germany into a great power was to prove disastrous to the people of Germany in the years to come.

Unification of Italy

Like Germany, Italy was also divided into a number of states. The major states in the early 19th century Italy were Sardinia, Lombardy, Venetia, Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (Sicily and Naples), Papal States, Tuscany, Parma and Modena. Of these the most powerful was the kingdom of Sardinia. Venetia and Lombardy were under Austrian occupation. Thus the Italian people were faced with the task of expelling the Austrians and forcing the rulers of independent states to unite. The struggle for Italian independence and unification was organized by the two famous revolutionaries of Italy whose names have been mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter—Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi. The movement led by them is known as the 'Young Italy' movement. It aimed at the independence and unification of Italy and the establishment of a republic there. In 1848, as in other parts of Europe, revolutionary uprisings had broken out in Italy and the rulers were forced to grant certain democratic reforms to the people. However, the goal of independence and unification was still distant.

8.21 Giuseppe Mazzini

The king of Sardinia had introduced many reforms in the political system of his kingdom after the revolution of 1848. After 1848, his prime minister, Count Cavour, took the initiative of uniting Italy under the leadership of Sardinia. Cavour's policy in some ways was similar to that followed by Bismarck in Germany. Hoping to gain the support of Britain and France, he entered the Crimean war in 1853-56 against Russia even though Sardinia had no dispute with Russia. However, nothing came out of this war. In 1859, Cavour entered into an alliance with Louis Bonaparte and went to war with Austria. Although France soon withdrew from the war, Austria was ousted from Lombardy, which was taken over by Sardinia. Tuscany, Modena, Parma and the Papal States of the north also joined Sardinia. Venetia, however, was still under Austrian occupation. The other states that remained to be united with Sardinia were the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and Rome which was under the rule of the Pope.

Meanwhile an uprising had broken out in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Garibaldi marched into the island of Sicily with his revolutionary fighters and liberated it from the rule of the king within three months. Then he marched to Naples in support of the revolt that had already broken out there. By the end of November 1860 the entire Kingdom of the Two Sicilies had been liberated. The Italian revolutionaries were not perhaps strong enough to push the victory of the people in the Sicilies further with a view to establishing a united republic of Italy. They surrendered the former kingdom to the King of Sardinia, Victor Emmanuel II, who then took the title of King of Italy in 1861. Garibaldi, the revolutionary who had played such a vital role in the liberation and unification of Italy, now retired to lead a life of obscurity.

Rome was still outside the kingdom of Italy. It was ruled over by the Pope with the help of the French soldiers provided to him by Louis Bonaparte. When the war between France and Prussia broke out in 1870, Bonaparte was forced to withdraw his troops from Rome. Italian soldiers occupied the city of Rome in 1870, and in July 1871, Rome became the capital of united Italy. In spite of the important role played by democratic and revolutionary leaders such as Mazzini and Garibaldi in the struggle for Italy's liberation and unification, Italy also, like Germany, became a monarchy.

The unification of Germany and Italy, in spite of the fact that democracy was not completely victorious there, marked a great advance in the history of the two countries.

The revolutions and movements described above, along with the Industrial Revolution, deeply influenced the course of the history of mankind. The forces that generated these revolutions and movements were also at work in other countries. Their success in one place fed the fires of revolt and encouraged change in the rest of the world. They are still being felt today, transforming social, political and economic life everywhere.

One of the aspects of the movements described so far is the gradual growth of political democracy, that is, the ever increasing participation of increasing number of people in the political life of a country. This happened in countries where the form of government became republican as well as in those which remained monarchies such as England, Germany and Italy. The period of autocracies and privileged aristocracies

was gradually coming to an end. Alongside, there were also the movements for national unity and national independence. These movements were victorious in Italy, Germany, and some other countries of Europe and in the Americas. In a few more decades they were to succeed in the rest of Europe and in the recent period in most of the world.

It is necessary to remember here that the new political and economic system that was emerging in Europe in the 19th century was also creating imperialism. The period of the triumph of democracy and nationalism in Europe was also the period of the conquest of Asia and Africa by the imperialist powers of Europe. The 19th century saw the beginning of the revolts against imperialism in Asia and Africa. There were two mighty rebellions—the revolt of 1857 in India and the Taiping rebellion in China. Later, nationalist movements in the modern sense began to be organized in all countries of Asia and Africa. You will read about these in a later chapter.

SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

You have read in Chapter 7 about the emergence of a new social and economic system called capitalism. Under this system, the means of production such as factories and the things produced by factories were owned and controlled by a few people. The vast majority of the people who worked in the factories had no rights. Their conditions of work and living were miserable. They were frequently without jobs. The workers gradually began to organize themselves into trade unions to protect their common rights though for a long time there were laws against workers combining themselves into unions. The governments were also forced to pass laws against some of the worse features of capitalism. For example, laws to protect workers from unsafe conditions of work were passed in many countries. Some progress was also made in regulating hours of work.

Some workers had begun to think that machines were the cause of their misery. In England, there was a movement to break machines led by the Luddites, so named after their leader Ned Ludd. However, they soon realized that the destruction of machines would not put an end to their misery. In England, a new political movement started which aimed at winning political rights for workers. This was the Chartist movement about which you have read before.

Early Socialists

The greatest challenge to capitalism came from the ideas of socialism and the movements based on those ideas. The idea grew that capitalism itself is evil and that it needs to be replaced by a different kind of social and economic system in which the means of production would be owned by the society as a whole and not by a few individuals.

Many philosophers and reformers in the past had expressed their revulsion against inequalities in society and in favour of a system in which everyone would be equal. However, these ideas had remained as mere dreams. The French Revolution of 1789 with its promise of equality had given a new impetus to these ideas. But the French Revolution, while it put an end to the autocratic rule of the French king, did not usher in an era of equality in economic, social and political life. The wide gap between the aims of the French Revolution and the actual conditions in France after the revolution

created serious discontent among the people. It led to an attempt to overthrow the existing government in France with a view to building a society based on socialist ideas. This attempt, known as Babeuf's Conspiracy, is an important event in the history of socialism.

The Conspiracy, as the name indicates, was the work of Babeuf. He was born in 1760 and had participated in the French Revolution. He organized a secret society called the Society of the Equals. Babeuf, in a manifesto, had declared, "Nature gave everyone an equal right to the enjoyment of all goods.....In a true society, there is no room for either rich or poor". He said that it was necessary to make another revolution which would do away "with the terrible contrasts between rich and poor, masters and servants ! The time has come to set up the republic of equals, whose welcoming doors will be open to all mankind." The society planned an uprising but the government came to know of the plan and in May 1796, a large number of leaders including Babeuf were arrested. Babeuf was executed in 1797. Though Babeuf's attempt at overthrowing the government had failed, his ideas exercised an important influence on the growth of socialist movement.

8.22 Francois– Noel Babeuf

There was another group of socialists in the early history of socialism which included Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772-1837), and Robert Owen (1771-1858). They viewed property in relation to its usefulness to society. They recognized the evils of capitalism and proposed the establishment of a new and better system of society in its place. Saint-Simon coined the slogan, 'from each according to his capacity, to each according to his work'. They visualized a society free from exploitation of any kind and one in which all would contribute their best and would share the fruits of their labour. However, the methods they advocated for the establishment of such a society were impracticable and ineffective. Hence they came to be called utopian socialists.

There were many other philosophers and revolutionaries who helped in spreading ideas of socialism. One of the most prominent among them was Louis-Auguste Blanqui (1805-81) who played a leading role in every uprising in Paris from the 1830's to 1871. He believed that through a revolutionary conspiracy, power could be captured to bring about socialism. When he died, 200,000 workers

joined the funeral procession in Paris.

Many groups and organisations were also formed to spread socialist ideas and organise workers. One of these was the League of the Just which had members in many countries of Europe. Its slogan was 'All men are brothers'. Thus internationalism was one of its important features. In 1847, its name was changed to the Communist League and it declared as its aim, "the downfall of the *bourgeoisie*, the rule of the proletariat, the overthrow of the old society of middle class, based on class distinction, and the establishment of a new society without classes and without private property." Its journal carried the slogan, "Proletarians of all lands, unite !" It instructed Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to draft a manifesto.

Marxian Socialism

The *Communist Manifesto* first appeared in German in February 1848. The influence of this document in the history of the socialist movement is without a rival. It was the work of Karl Marx (1818-83) and his lifelong associate Frederick Engels (1820-95). Both Marx and Engels were born in Germany, but spent much of their life outside Germany, mostly in England. Through their work in the socialist movement and through their numerous writings, they gave a new direction to socialist ideology and movement. Their philosophy is known as Marxism and it has influenced almost every field of knowledge. Their view of socialism is called *scientific socialism*.

The *Communist Manifesto* stated that the aim of workers all over the world was the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism. "In place of the old *bourgeois* society, with its classes and class differences", it said "appears an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all". It pointed out that socialism was not merely desirable, but also inevitable. Capitalism, it said, does not serve the needs of man and, like other social and economic systems in history, it would be replaced by a system better suited to human needs. Marx analysed the working of capitalism in his famous work *Das Kapital* (Capital) and pointed out the characteristics that would lead to its destruction. According to him, workers produce more 'value' than they get in the

Manifeſt

der

Kommuniſtiſchen Partei.

Veröffentlicht im Februar 1848.

Proletarier aller Länder vereinigt euch.

London.

8.23 Cover page of the first edition of the Communist Manifesto, published in London in February 1848, in German

form of wages, the difference being appropriated by the capitalists in the form of profits. This, Marx said, constitutes the basis of conflict in capitalist society. Profits can be increased at the cost of workers' wages and, therefore, the interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable. He pointed out that economic crises were inevitable under capitalism because of the discrepancy between the purchasing power of workers and total production. These crises would be resolved only if the private ownership of the means of production is abolished and the profit motive eliminated from the system of production. With this, production would be carried on for social good rather than for profits for a few. The exploiting classes would disappear and a classless society would emerge in which there would be no difference between what was good for the individual and for society as a whole. Marx and Engels believed that this would be accomplished by the working class which was the most revolutionary class in capitalist society. They advocated that the emancipation of the working class would emancipate the whole human race from all traces of social injustice.

8.24 Karl Marx addressing a meeting in London in the 1850's

Around the time the *Communist Manifesto* was published, revolutions broke out in almost every country in Europe. You have read about these revolutions of 1848 before. These revolts aimed at the overthrow of autocratic governments, establishment of democracy and also, in countries such as Italy and Germany, at national unification. One of the major forces in these revolutions were the workers who had been inspired by ideas of socialism. The Communist League participated in these revolutions in many countries. However, all these revolutions were suppressed.

With the failure of the 1848 revolutions, the socialist movement seems to have abated. However, it was soon to rise in strength again. One of the outstanding features of the various socialist groups was their internationalist character. You have read about the Communist League before. In Britain, an organisation called the Society of Fraternal Democrats had been formed in 1846. It had close links with other similar organizations in Europe and with the Chartists in Britain. All these organisations emphasised the idea that

the cause of the working class in all countries was the same. A leader of the Society of Fraternal Democrats, for example, said in 1848, "I appeal to the oppressed classes in every country to unite for the common cause." The people, according to him, were the workers and peasants, and the cause of the people was "the cause of labour, of labour enslaved and exploited....In all countries there are people who grow corn and eat potatoes, who make clothes and wear rags, who build houses and live in wretched hovels. Do not the workers of all nations have the same reason for complaint and the same causes of distress? Have they not, therefore, the same just cause?" It was these ideas of international solidarity that were to remain the fundamental features of the socialist movement in the coming years.

The First International

One of the most important events in the history of the socialist movement was the formation in 1864 of the International Working Men's Association, or the First International, as it is called. With its formation, it has been said, " Socialism stepped on the stage of history as a world movement". The meeting at which it was formed took place in London and was attended by delegates from Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Poland and Switzerland. Marx drafted 'An Address to the Working Classes' which has become famous as the 'Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association'. This "Address" along with the General Rules outlined the principles and aims of the International. The emancipation of the working classes, it was declared, must be won by the working classes themselves. The central aim of the International was declared to be the total 'abolition of all class rule'. The universal character of the struggle of the working class was emphasised. The Address ended with the slogan, as in the *Communist Manifesto*, "Proletarians of all lands, unite !"

From the time of its formation, the International was considered by the governments of the time as a menace and attempts were made to exterminate it. It was persecuted and declared illegal in many countries.

During the short period of its existence, the International exercised a tremendous influence on workers' movements in Europe and North America. It played a particularly important role in creating bonds of international solidarity by arranging aid from workers of many countries in support of the workers' struggle in any particular country. For example, when in 1867, 5000 bronze workers in Paris who had formed a union were threatened with dismissal, the International collected money for them from workers in other countries and forced the factory owners to withdraw their threats. Though its membership was not very large, it was feared by the rulers for the sense of workers' solidarity that it had succeeded in creating.

One of the finest examples of workers' solidarity was evidenced at the time of the war between Prussia and France in 1870. You have read about this war earlier in the context of the unification of Germany. The war was condemned both by the German and French workers as a crime committed by the French and Prussian dynasties. The French and German branches of the International sent messages of good wishes and solidarity to each other. The Social Democratic Party in Germany in a message to the French workers, said,

"...we shall never forget that the workers of all nations are our friends and the despots of all nations are our enemies." After the defeat of the French army, the German government announced its intention to annex Alsace-Lorraine from France. The German workers protested against this and there were many demonstrations in various cities of Germany. All the leaders of German workers were arrested on charges of treason.

The Paris Commune, 1871

The war between France and Prussia led to another important development—an uprising by the workers of Paris and the seizure of power by them. This is one of the most important events in the history of socialism. Within a few weeks of the war the French army had been defeated and the French emperor Louis Bonaparte had been taken prisoner. A new government had come into being and had declared France a republic. This government was dominated by the propertied classes and had agreed to Bismarck's terms for truce including the surrender of Paris, cession of Alsace-Lorraine and the payment of a huge war indemnity. The workers of Paris regarded the surrender by the government as treacherous. They refused to surrender. The government withdrew from Paris on 18 February 1871 and asked for German help to crush Paris. The workers of Paris elected a council which on 28 March 1871 assumed the title of the Paris Commune. It was elected by universal adult franchise and represented the workers and the lower middle classes of Paris. It proclaimed as its aim "the ending...of exploitation, stock-exchange speculation, monopolies and privileges to which the proletariat attributes its slavery, and the fatherland its misery and ruin". All public offices were elected by universal suffrage with people having the right to recall.

The Paris Commune was the result of an upsurge in which the workers had played the dominant role, the result of the first workers' revolution in history. It was soon drowned in blood. The French government which had established its headquarters in Versailles attacked Paris with a huge army. In this they received the help of Germany also. The attacks on Paris had begun in April. On 21 May the troops entered Paris. The battle continued in the city of Paris up to 28 May when the Commune was finally exterminated. The government which had surrendered to the German invaders, however, turned on the workers of Paris with unusual ferocity. It is estimated that between 14,000 to 30,000 defenders of the Commune were slaughtered in the streets of Paris or killed by firing squads. Thousands were deported and imprisoned. The French government called it the victory of order, justice and civilization. The International's address on the Commune to its members, written by Marx, concluded with the words, "Working Men's Paris, with its Commune, will be for ever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them".

The extermination of the Commune was followed by systematic attempts to destroy the International in almost every country of Europe. The International had organised support for the Commune and after its destruction was engaged in aiding the refugees from Paris. It appeared to gain strength in many countries of Europe in

spite of the fact that the revolution in Paris had been suppressed. However, soon it collapsed as a result of internal differences. The International was not a homogeneous organisation. It represented many different trends in the workers' movement. Due to differences on aims and methods, it was split in 1872 and was formally dissolved in 1876. In the meantime, however, the socialist parties in many countries of Europe had begun to grow and after a few years they were to unite and form another International.

The Second International

When the First International was formed, there did not exist well-organised socialist parties; there were only a few groups. However, in the 1870's and the 1880's in almost every country in Europe socialist parties were formed. Some of them became quite strong having lakhs of members. They participated in national elections and in some countries came to have a fairly large representation in the parliament. Similarly, the strength and membership of the trade unions also increased and there were many strikes. For example, the German Socialist Party had polled over 750,000 votes in 1887. It was the largest socialist party in Europe. In Britain, where the trade unions had a membership of a million, had been formed the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League and the Fabian Society. In France there were many socialist parties. There were socialist parties in every other country of Europe with varying strength and in USA and some other countries in the Americas. Socialist movement began to take root in Japan in the 1890's. Thus though the First International had been dissolved, the socialist movement had become a mass movement.

To unite the socialist parties in various countries into an international organisation, a Congress was held in Paris on 14 July 1889, the centenary of the French Revolution of 1789. The result of this Congress was what has come to be known as the Second International. The formation of the Second International marked a new stage in the history of socialism. An important step taken at the Congress was to make the first of May every year as a day of working class solidarity. It was decided to organise on that day a great international demonstration in such a way what "the workers in all lands and cities will simultaneously demand from the powers-that-be a limitation of the working day to eight hours". On the first of May 1890, millions of workers all over Europe and America struck work and held massive demonstrations. Since then the first of May is observed as the international working class day all over the world.

The period after the formation of the Second International saw a steady increase in the strength of the socialist parties and of trade unions. In 1914, the membership of the socialist party of Germany was over a million and it had polled over 4 million votes; in France, the socialists has polled about 1.4 million votes; in Austria, over a million. The total number of trade union membership in Germany, Britain and France alone was about 8 million. The socialist and workers' movement had become a major force in almost every country of Europe.

The most significant achievements of the Second International were its campaign against militarism and war and in asserting the principle of the basic equality of all peoples and their right to

freedom and national independence. The period from the last decade of the 19th century saw the growing militarization of every country in Europe. It was a period when war seemed imminent and every country was spending increasingly huge sums in preparing for it. Europe was getting divided into groups of warring blocs, the struggle for colonies being the main cause of conflicts between them. The struggle against militarism and the prevention of war became the major aims of the Second International and of the socialist parties affiliated to it. They expressed the conviction that capitalism was the root cause of war. They also resolved that while wars could be ended only with the destruction of capitalism, it was the duty of the socialists to prevent their occurrence and, if they broke out, to bring about their speedy end. The second International also decided that the socialists should utilize the "economic and political crisis created by the war, to rouse the masses and thereby to hasten the downfall of capitalist rule". The socialist movement had made the international solidarity of workers as a fundamental principle. When Russia and Japan were warring on each other, the leader of the Japanese socialist group and the leader of the Russian socialists were made the joint presidents of the Second International at its Congress in 1904. The socialists in many countries had resolved to call for a general strike to prevent their countries from participating in wars. They suffered at the hands of their governments who were preparing for war. Jean Jaures, the great leader of the French socialists was assassinated on the eve of the First World War for campaigning against war.

The Second International also condemned colonialism and committed the socialist parties to oppose the robbery and subjugation of colonial peoples. The 1904 Congress was attended by the Grand Old Man of the Indian national movement, Dadabhai Naoroji, who pleaded the cause of India's freedom. He was supported by the British delegates at the Congress. The President asked the Congress "to treat with the greatest reverence the statement of the Indian delegate, an old man of eighty, who had sacrificed fifty-five years of his life to the struggle for the freedom and happiness of his people". When Dadabhai Naoroji went to the rostrum, he was greeted with tumultuous cheers and appalause.

In spite of its many achievements and its growing strength, the Second International suffered from many weaknesses. Unlike the First International, it was a loose federation of socialist parties of many countries. While the socialist parties in many countries had become mass parties, basic differences had arisen among them. While some sections believed in the necessity of a revolution to overthrow capitalism, others began to believe that socialism could be achieved through gradual reforms. The latter were willing to support the existing governments in certain circumstances. Some sections in the socialist parties even favoured colonialism. On the question of war, while the attitude of the Second International was clear, many socialist parties had serious differences. Some of them thought that if they organised opposition to the war, they would be crushed. They were also not willing, as the Second International had recommended, to utilize the war, once it had broken out, to promote revolution. It was on the question of the war that the Second International suffered a fatal blow. When

the First World War broke out, most of the socialist parties extended their support to their respective governments. This had serious consequences for the socialist movement. The Second International ceased to function and the socialist movement in every country was split. With the outbreak of the First World War, an important phase in the history of the socialist movement came to a close.

Though the socialist movement did not succeed in bringing about a socialist revolution in any country in the 19th century, it brought about widespread awareness of the problems created by capitalism and the inadequacies of democracy. It also emerged as a powerful political movement in a number of countries. It was to play an increasingly important role in the coming years all over the world, making socialism, along with democracy and nationalism, the dominating factor in the history of the world in the 20th century.

EXERCISES

Things to know

1. Explain the following terms : Third Estate, Bourgeoisie, Proletariat, Junkers, Paris Commune, Means of Production, Socialism, Utopian Socialists.
2. Identify the following people, telling the part each played in the revolutions and movements described in this chapter : Jefferson, Washington, Thomas Paine, Louis XVI, Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Napoleon, Simon Bolivar, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour, Bismarck, Babeuf, Karl Marx.
3. Explain briefly the conditions that brought about the American and French revolutions.
4. What were the main ideas behind the French Revolution ?
5. Explain why the following documents were 'revolutionary' when they were written : Declaration of Independence, Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, Communist Manifesto.
6. Explain the impact of the French Revolution on the Spanish colonies in America.
7. Describe the different stages in the unification of Germany and Italy.
8. When was the First International formed ? What were its main contributions to the growth of the socialist movement ?
9. When was the Second International formed ? For which other great event is that year important? What were the main aims of the Second International ?

Things to do

1. Select a suitable scale to show events on a time-line beginning with 1774 and ending with 1871. Show on this line the revolutions and movements described in this chapter and the various events connected with them.
2. Write a paper entitled 'People Revolt when Conditions become Unbearable', using the revolutions as evidence.
3. Read the 'revolutionary documents' cited in No.5 above and select statements for a bulletin board dispaly under the heading 'Ideas that Caused Revolutions'.

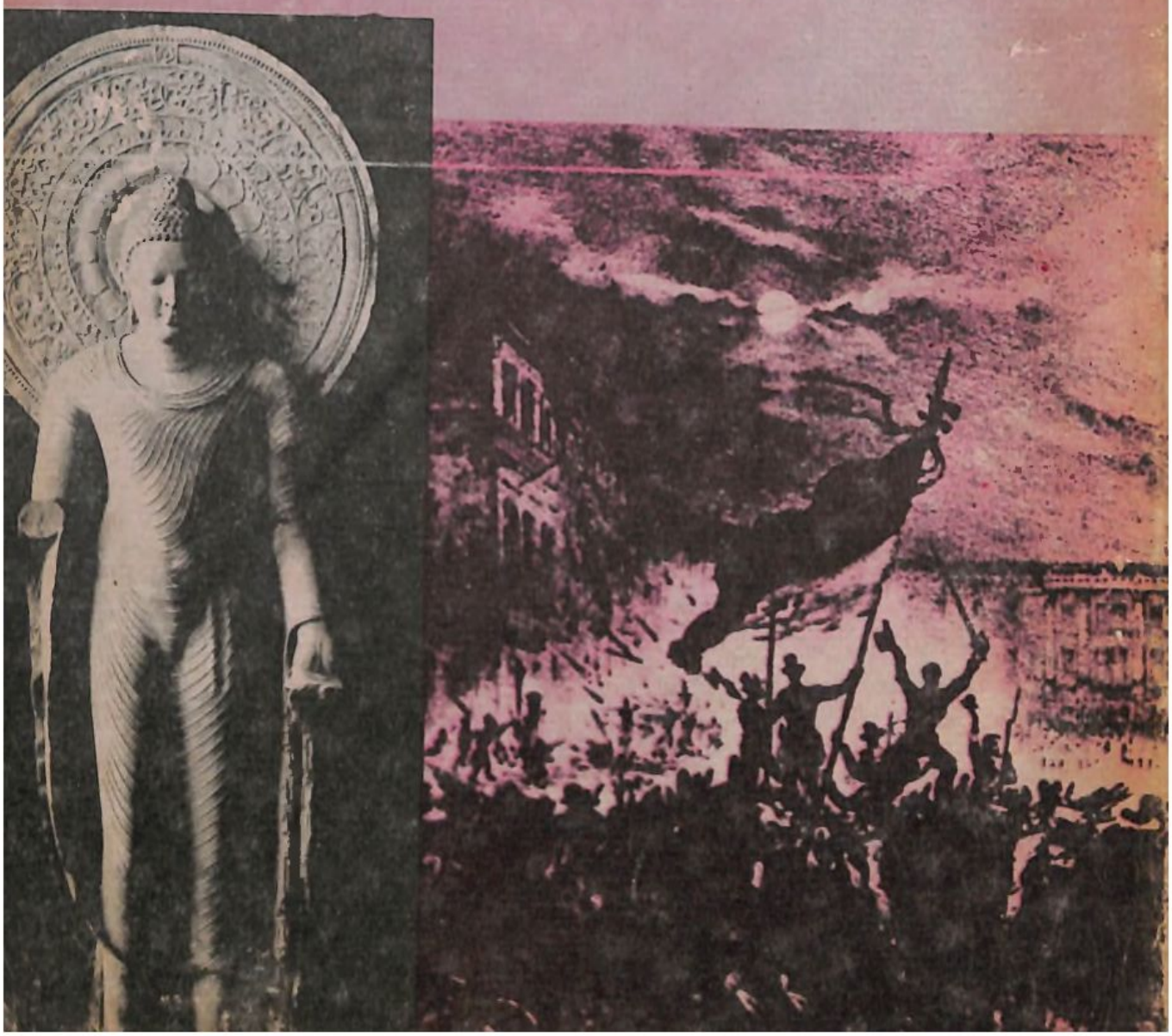
4. Ask your teacher to suggest books in which you can read about other revolutions and movements in detail– for example, in Latin America in the 19th century.
5. Prepare essays on the lives of persons who also participated in the revolutionary movements of countries other than their own.
6. Read a few documents connected with the socialist movement and select statements for a bulletin board dispaly, under the heading 'Ideas of Socialism'.

Things to think about and discuss

1. What is a socio-political revolution ? Why are revolutions often violent? When can a revolution be called successful ?
2. Which of the revolutions seems to have brought about the greatest change to the country where the revolution occurred? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Do you think that each of the revolutions and movements described in this chapter could truthfully be called a step forward in the progress of man ? Why or why not.
4. Why did France help the revolutionary forces in the American Revolution ?
5. Why did the achievement of national unity in Germany and Italy not result in the establishment of republics in these countries ?
6. Why were the aims of the socialist movement internationalist in character from th very beginning ? Discuss.
7. Discuss the role of Karl Marx in the history of the socialist movement.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU CENTENARY

1889 1989

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING